

INDEPENDENT

No 2,847

50p

(Republic of Ireland 65p)

Clinton puts the heat on Adams

IAN MURDOCH
PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES

Joint Bill Clinton leaves today after a visit that has given a boost to the Ulster issue and put Sinn Féin under pressure. As he arrived of 80,000 in the British and invited all the parties to be at the talks as the "twin" talks will be decommis-

Mr Patrick State for Dick affairs hope

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The Clintons arrival in Dublin yesterday drew huge crowds and, following his momentous visit to Londonderry and Belfast, sealed a personal political triumph. He delivered a passionate plea for a lasting solution to the troubles and an end to bloodshed.

He called on his Irish people to stand firm alongside Premier John Bruton as he took the necessary risks in the search for peace. He later toasted his success with a glass of Irish stout in a Dublin pub bearing his mother's maiden name, Cassidy. He praised the two Governments' twin-track initiative as "a brilliant formulation which permits people to go forward without giving up any of the things they believe in and have to have. I am inclined to believe it will succeed. The lesson of the past 15 months is that people like peace. They want it to go forwards not backwards."

John Major yesterday acclaimed Mr Clinton's trip as giving a "huge boost" to the cause of peace. "Can anyone who witnessed President Clinton's remarkable visit to Northern Ireland seriously contemplate a return to bombing and shooting?" the Prime Minister told the Conservative Women's conference in Westminster.

Mr Bruton admitted the visit to Britain and Ireland created the opportunity for London and Dublin to have a breakthrough.

His endorsement came as the membership was announced of the new international body. As expected, it was chaired by former US Secretary of State George Mitchell, 62, and the Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, 62, and Mr Harri Holkeri, 71, was Finland's premier from 1991.

Doctor in the House as university honours Blair



Legal eagle: Labour leader Tony Blair receiving an honorary doctorate in civil law at the University of Northumbria, Newcastle Photograph: Reuter

City frenzy over 'cure for cancer'

TOM STEVENSON
and TOM WILKIE

The City has whipped itself into a frenzy in the belief it can cash in on the holy grail of medical research - a cure for cancer. In their scramble not to miss out on the billions to be made from a cure, investors are brushing aside warnings from the medical establishment that it is too early to tell if a breakthrough has been made.

In spite of caution from researchers and clinicians, shares in an almost unknown company, British Biotech, have nearly doubled in value in two days. One buyer was said to have paid £25 a share, five times what British Biotech's shares fetched just a couple of months ago. British Biotech, an Oxford-

based research company with a raft of potential therapies for cancer and arthritis, has only reported "positive interim findings" from clinical trials of the new drug Marimastat, involving 94 patients in advanced stages of cancers in the lower bowel, ovaries, prostate and pancreas. There was some evidence that tumours may have shrunk in about one-third of patients.

Hectic dealing in British Biotech shares put a value of more than £800m on the company in spite of the fact that it has never made a profit. Share dealers shrugged off a £10m loss on Thursday morning to send the stock soaring from £10 a share to £16.75 last night.

Analysts were finding it hard to contain their enthusiasm for the company, which triggered

the City's buying binge on Thursday by publishing a set of promising results from tests.

One said: "The share price has huge potential. It could be bigger than Glaxo in the 1980s." From modest research beginnings, Glaxo grew to become Britain's largest company, worth more than £30bn, mainly because of the success of just one treatment, the Zantac anti-ulcer drug. Earlier this year, Glaxo launched an unprecedented £9bn hostile bid for Wellcome, maker of the AIDS drug Zidovudine.

But senior cancer researchers and clinicians greeted with scepticism claims that the new drug could be a billion-pound cancer cure. Professor Gordon McVie, director of the Cancer Research Campaign, said: "I'd

doubt it, based on the results so far. There's no way you can say that on 94 patients."

Marimastat is scientifically interesting because it acts against a different target compared to existing cancer drugs, according to Dr Fran Balkwill, a principal scientist with the Imperial Cancer Research Fund. It also has the advantage that it can be taken orally, at home, rather than injected in hospital. But Dr Balkwill added: "We must be extremely careful not to raise false hopes. This is an early first step along a very long path. It does something, but whether it will benefit patients in the long term - we cannot say that this is a new cure for cancer."

Ann Barrett, Professor of Oncology at Glasgow University, said: "It is too early to say

from these results if it helps patients and there is reason to be sceptical because often good effects in phase two trials are not borne out in phase three."

Prof McVie said preliminary results were encouraging and spoke highly of British Biotech's expertise. The company has not yet compared the drug's action against existing treatments that will come with phase three - randomised trials involving large numbers of patients to assess if the drug does improve on current therapies.

Shares scramble, page 4

Is for jail after on two counts

Today all aspects of the case were completed in the court. His defence counsel, Mr. [Name], said the authorisation was "on a return."

ment has charges made a forgery. "I am sure," he said, "that the authorisation was not a forgery."

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BSkyB faces inquiry into 'monopoly' on sport and films

MATHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

UK competition authorities yesterday struck at one of Rupert Murdoch's most lucrative operations, vowing a wide-ranging inquiry into the activities of the satellite broadcaster BSkyB.

The move by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) was heralded by smaller cable companies, which have led a loud and public campaign aimed at convincing regulators in the UK and in Brussels to rein in BSkyB, the nation's most profitable television broadcaster, and 40 per cent owned by Mr Murdoch's News Corporation.

At stake are BSkyB's supply

arrangements with the cable industry, under which 28 TV channels, including Sky Sports and Sky Movies, are distributed wholesale at prices set by BSkyB. Small cable operators complain that the company's near-monopoly on film and sport for pay-TV, as well as its control of conditional access technology used to scramble and unscramble television signals, constitute an abuse of a dominant position.

BSkyB chief executive Sam Chisbom promised full co-operation with the inquiry, but sharply criticised the complaining operators, suggesting they were using the regulatory process to further their business,

rather than competing in the market place.

The OFT said yesterday it would also look at BSkyB's exclusive deals to broadcast sport, to determine whether they should be referred to the Restrictive Practices Court. Under an agreement with the Premier League, BSkyB has the right to match any price for television rights offered by competitors.

The Premier League has received legal advice that the clause is not enforceable. BSkyB countered that the clause was introduced at the request of the Premier League when the current £304m contract, due to expire in 1997, was signed three-and-a-half years ago.

Epic manuscript sold for £276,000

ARE GARNER

original handwritten manuscript of Erich M Remarque's anti-war novel, *All in the Western Front*, was sold for £276,000 at Sotheby's.

The document had only come to light after decades in the hands of the author's first wife, who included a pre-war episode in

tially written for the opening of the novel, which caused a sensation when it was first published in 1929.

The manuscript was bought by Julia Rosenthal, an international dealer acting on behalf of a German buyer in Osnabrück, Remarque's birthplace.

Ms Rosenthal, who is based in Oxford, said after the sale: "This is a key work of the 20th century and it is particularly fitting that it should have come to light in a year when attention is

so focused on war. The appearance of this manuscript will enable the definitive text of the novel to be established. It is a dream of a manuscript."

Dr Susan Wharton, Sotheby's expert in continental manuscripts, said: "The existence of this text was unsuspected until very recently."

"Its appearance is a literary event of major importance and we are very pleased with the price it realised."

The novel recounts the ex-

periences of a young private in the trenches in the First World War, and depicts the horrors in a stark, realistic style. It was one of the books burnt publicly by the Nazis in Berlin in 1933, and Remarque himself remained *persona non grata* in Germany for another 50 years. It has been translated into 45 languages and sold an estimated 50 million copies world-wide.

Giuseppe Verdi's working manuscript for *Otello* fetched £188,500 at the same auction.

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JES 18
22

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WEEKEND**

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news

A city confers its freedom on the president



Local colour: President Bill Clinton samples the stout in Cassidy's bar in Dublin yesterday

Alan Murdoch sees the President and Hillary receive a rousing reception

Alan Murdoch, the Irish-born owner of the Sunday Times, was in Dublin yesterday to see the President and Hillary receive the Freedom of the City.

Some 400,000 people were expected to see the President and Hillary in the city.

Mr Clinton and his wife Hillary arrived in Dublin yesterday afternoon and were welcomed to the city by the Mayor of Dublin, John Gormley.

After the charged euphoria of London, the welcome outside Trinity College was relaxed and festive.

After Irish musicians warmed up the young crowd, Mr Clinton appeared to a huge roar.

Mr Clinton and his wife Hillary were the guests of honor at a reception in the city.

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Bhagwan women jailed for five years over US murder plot

DAVID USBORNE
Portland, Oregon

United States judge yesterday sentenced two British women to five years in prison each for conspiring to murder the US Attorney for the state of Oregon while members of the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh "free-love" cult 10 years ago.

The two women, Sally-Anne Croft, 45, and Susan Hagan, 48, were convicted four months ago by an Oregon jury of helping to hatch a plot at the Bhagwan's sprawling compound in the centre of the state, known as "Rancho Rajneesh", to assassinate the then federal Attorney, Charles Turner.

The sentence, delivered by Judge Malcolm Marsh in an emotional hearing in court, was considerably more lenient than most had expected. Technically, the pair could have been imprisoned for life, although that was never thought likely. Both women will be able to seek pa-



Treated leniently: Susan Hagan, left, and Sally-Anne Croft, sentenced yesterday after five-year legal battle

role after serving just one-third of their sentences but can expect to serve two-thirds. They will begin their sentences next month, probably in a low-security camp

Marsh indicated he still had not decided finally on the length of the sentences. He said that while the crime committed was "most serious indeed" he had been swayed by some 50 letters of support sent to the court by friends and supporters of the women since their conviction.

"I do have a sense from the letters I have received of support that the defendants have confronted and have considered what they were involved in and I sense they believe that it is something that they would have better have avoided," the judge concluded.

Hagan thanked the judge for allowing her to stay free pending the sentencing. In recent weeks she has been working on an AIDS project. "Your generosity in allowing me to stay out on bail has allowed me in some small way to give back to the community," she said.

Yesterday marked the climax of five years of legal battles for the two women. They

had returned to Britain in 1985 after abandoning the cult shortly before it fell apart and the white-bearded Bhagwan, famed for his fleet of 94 Rolls Royces, fled to his native India, where he later died.

When the US government revealed in 1990 that it was seeking to extradite the women in 1990 to stand trial in Oregon, they earned the support of several high-profile British figures, including MPs such as Tony Blair and Paddy Ashdown. The extradition request was finally granted by the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, in 1994.

The assassination plan arose because Mr Turner was leading a grand jury inquiry into allegations of mass immigration fraud on Rancho Rajneesh. The ranch's inner circle, which included both Croft and Hagan, were apparently concerned that his investigations threatened the continued existence of the cult and had to be stopped.

Lottery blamed as charity slashes spending

REBECCA FOWLER

Save the Children - one of Britain's largest charities - yesterday announced sweeping £9m cuts to its projects across the world because of a continuing fall in its income, which it believes has been compounded by the effect of the National Lottery.

The charity, which funds projects in 50 countries and whose president is the Princess Royal, is to cut its £91m overall budget by 10 per cent April 1997.

"It's a very tough fund-raising climate anyway, and half of our income is from voluntary contributions, which is under pressure," said Don Redding, a spokesman for Save the Children.

"People feel they don't have much money in their pockets, and they're not going to have much money coming in in the future."

"When you add the lottery to

that, it's a significant new pressure that adds to the problem."

The cuts will result in job losses and the closure of projects, including family centres and schemes for young people leaving care in Britain. The 80 British projects supported by Save the Children will not escape unscathed.

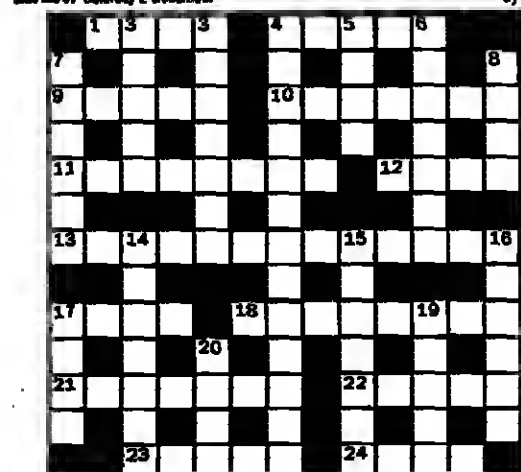
It is not the first funding crisis the charity has faced. Last year, it announced it was cutting £30m from its budget over four years as a result of the decline in fund-raising.

In a statement issued yesterday the charity said: "In the changed world of the Nineties we have found ourselves trapped between increasing demands around the world as children become poorer, more exploited, and a vast which has affected every pocket at home."

Camelot, the National Lottery operator, denied it was

concise crossword

No. 2847 Saturday 2 December By Miss



ACROSS

- 1 Years for (4)
- 4 Gorse (5)
- 9 Jots (5)
- 10 Object (7)
- 11 Undergoing (8)
- 12 Bird (4)
- 13 Wrote by exposure (7-6)
- 17 Young house (4)
- 18 Upright (8)
- 21 Awaiting settlement (7)
- 22 Spanish island (5)
- 23 Prevent (5)
- 24 Pout (4)

DOWN

- 2 Bury (5)
- 3 A narcotic (7)
- 4 Bower (13)
- 5 Roster (4)
- 6 Extract (7)
- 7 Type of puzzle (6)
- 8 Name (anag) (4)
- 14 Capital of Georgia (7)
- 15 Participant (7)
- 16 Famous seaman (6)
- 17 Shoulder-ear (4)
- 19 Felony (5)
- 20 Mellow (4)

Solutions to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
Across: 1 Nines, 3 Pines (Narcotics), 7 Kailash, 8 Edge, 9 Key signature, 10 Ad-
dress, 12 Quail, 14 Queen-Jessamine, 15 Stone, 19 Almaty, 20 Rovers, 21 Ring, Down:
1 New-dell, 2 Water, 3 Hints, 4 Sceptic, 5 Sugar, 6 Deride, 11 Unlabeled, 12 Com-
bat, 13 Lullaby, 17 Tunes, 18 Jemima, 19 Eater

THE WEATHER

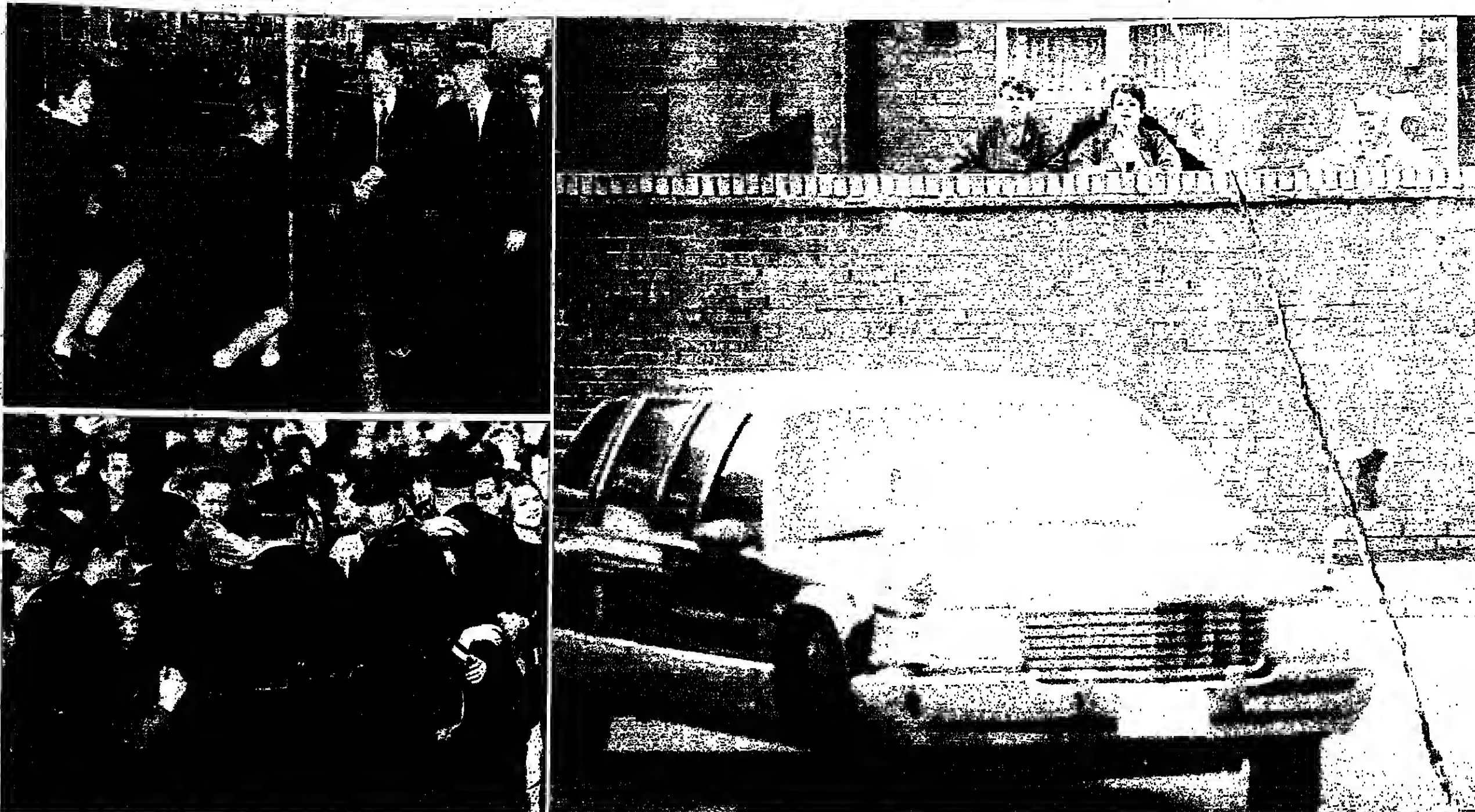
NOON FORECAST



High 10 in central Scotland but will intensify. Low 7 will develop off the coast north-west. High 11 will move quickly towards Ireland.

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and a people rejoice in the spirit of peace



Irish welcome: Top left, schoolgirls rush to greet the President in the Falls Road, Belfast; below left, RUC officers keep the crowds back in west Belfast; main picture, the presidential car tours east Belfast Photographs: AP/Reuters/John 1/005

There might not have been quite so many people in Dublin's College Green had we not seen the huge party that turned out for Bill Clinton in Belfast and Londonderry. The Dubs will not be outdone.

The rain lifted from the skies when Air Force one approached Dublin Airport and Ireland's most popular radio show hosted by Gay Byrne urged the listeners to go out and give the man a proper welcome.

Stop complaining about the traffic restriction and the roads being closed off, stop bellyaching about the hundreds of secret service men in machinist coats speaking into their wrists and peering through sunglasses for terrorists on the roofs of what we know to be perfectly blameless buildings. Go in there, show the man that we

appreciate that he's doing something for peace.

The President met the leaders in the government Buildings while Hillary Rodham Carter spoke to an invited audience of Irish women in Ireland's national Gallery.

Standing under the famous Daniel Maclise painting "The Marriage of Strongbow and

Aoife" the 12th Century liaison that cemented the whole unfortunate and confused relationship between the two islands, the wife of the President of America urged the women of Ireland to be courageous in carrying out all the hopes and dreams of these days; the work of peace was too important to be left to the elected leaders.

And then it came to the bit that the people of Dublin could join in, the part where the President was made the 63d Freeman of Dublin City.

Standing in front of the magnificent building that once held the parliament of a united Ireland and Britain for a few short years at the end of the eighteenth century, Bill Clinton

faced his public. There were thousands and thousands there, office workers on very long lunch-times, families from the suburbs who had brought children in by bus and train to see a bit of history. They said to each other that he was taller, and greyer and better-looking than he looked on television. He could have stayed for

ever and ever, his face so familiar suddenly relocated in familiar streets was heavy.

But there were huge other things like a pint of Guinness in Cassidy's pub and an address to both Houses of the Irish Parliament, a state banquet, he couldn't stay all that making jokes with dubs and waving to their children.

Did they like him? Almost certainly and universally yes. The average Dubliner is cynical but not as they went from the Friday afternoon in the fresh air.

A man taking his children home by the hand through the happy streets gave the man his due. He sees himself as a peace-maker, and don't we need those badly? Maeve Binchy is a columnist for the Irish Times

Maeve Binchy, the novelist, finds joy on the streets of Dublin and hope in Irish hearts

First Lady lambasted over 'pointless women's meeting'

VICKY WARD

At the start of the President's European tour, Hillary Clinton told the 22 distinguished women who had coffee with her in the plush environs of the US ambassador's dining room on Wednesday morning that the only way to deal with criticism is not to take it personally. "Women spend too much time worrying about other people's approval and not whether or not they approve of themselves," she said. Hours later she needed to put those words into practice.

Mrs Clinton's London coffee morning was not deemed a

success either by most of the women "delegates" chosen to attend it or the right-wing British press who gave it almost as much critical press attention as her husband's speech on the Irish peace process to Westminster. The *Daily Mail*, which even devoted a leader to the subject, are indignant at the selection of what they see as an unrepresentative bunch of lefties to exchange views on women's issues.

The guests, who included the *Independent's* associate editor Polly Ryndes, Gillian Shepherd, the Secretary of State for Education, Baroness Blackstone, Labour's foreign Affairs

spokeswoman in the Lords, and Georgia Henry, deputy editor of the *Guardian*, were unsure as to who had actually chosen them, or indeed why. Most were rung by US Embassy staff only the night before, and the maximum notice was 48 hours.

Some, like Lola Bubbosh, the deputy editor of the *Literary Review*, thought there must be some mistake when they were told Mrs Clinton wanted to canvas the opinions of British women on British women's issues - Ms Bubbosh is American.

There was no written format to the meeting, and no obvious chair. After Mrs Clinton had met everybody individually - she

was introduced to Mrs Shephard first and, after enquiring what she did, commented: "That must be an important job." - Baroness Blackstone kicked off the discussion. Mrs Clinton said little throughout, "but" says one source "she nodded a lot".

Not all of Mrs Clinton's guests saw the point, however. "Most meetings end up with some agenda of some kind, some purpose," said one unattributedly. "But none of us knew where this discussion was going."

A spokesman for Mrs Clinton said the First Lady "does this every time she goes abroad and there is time".

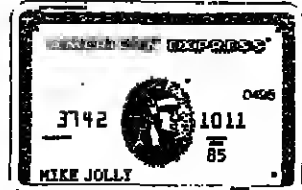
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In the Sunday Review

Kids' stuff: fashion for the under-fives

Star wars: the astrologers' battle to succeed Patric Walker

In Real Life

Ben Thompson meets Patsy Kensit

No laughing matter: women comics and anti-men jokes

What to buy her? Best books for Christmas



news

Medical breakthrough: Company's fresh approach to treatment of disease stirs interest of scientists and City

New drug offers hope for cancer sufferers

TOM WILKIE
Science Editor

The most effective cure for cancer is the surgeon's knife. A combination of surgery and radiotherapy ranks second in terms of effectiveness while chemotherapy - anti-cancer drugs - accounts for comparatively few cancer cures.

But surgery is effective only if the cancer cells have not spread around the body from the original tumour, in a process known as metastasis. Once a cancer has metastasised, then the prognosis is bleak.

It is here, in preventing tumours from metastasising, that British Biotech's new drug, Marimastat, offers most hope. Dr Fran Balkwill, principal scientist at the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, said: "The long-term dream of this treatment is that you live with your cancer - you keep taking a pill and it doesn't spread. If your cancer is not spreading anywhere and not disrupting any vital function then it doesn't matter so much."

Dr Balkwill emphasised that while "it's a very interesting scientific idea, these are very early data. We can't say this is a new cure for cancer."

According to Ann Barrett, professor of oncology at Glasgow University, "although overall, chemotherapy contributes in only a relatively small way to cures in cancer, a drug that could stop metastasis would be of interest and could be used in conjunction with the effective local treatments we do have - surgery and radiotherapy". Professor Barrett also emphasised that "it is too early to assess if these drugs are going to be useful in clinical practice".

Marimastat's other significant potential benefit to patients would be that it can be taken orally, possibly at home, rather than having to be injected in hospital. It also appears to have

less awful side-effects than existing anti-cancer therapies.

Current anti-cancer drugs attack and kill fast dividing cells. Tumour cells grow quickly, but so does hair and the cells lining the gut - which is why people feel nauseated and sometimes their hair falls out during chemotherapy.

Professor Gordon McVie, director of the Cancer Research Campaign, said Marimastat is "an interesting drug because it's got a new target". The drug obstructs powerful enzymes associated with tumours - matrix metalloproteinases.

Dr Balkwill said that in epithelial cancers - for example those located on the lining of the gut wall - there is a thin wall of collagen that can prevent the tumour spreading but these enzymes are breaking it down. If the tumour is to spread, it needs these matrix metalloproteinases and other enzymes to get into the blood and circulate.

By concentrating on the body's mechanisms for containing the cancer rather than on killing tumour cells, Marimastat "has a completely different line of attack", Dr Balkwill said.

British Biotech reported interim results on clinical trials of 94 patients with advanced colorectal, pancreatic, ovarian and prostate cancer. The company did not measure tumour shrinkage directly, instead it used a surrogate measure - the concentration of "cancer antigens" in the patients' bloodstream.

In 33 per cent of those taking the drug for 28 days, levels of antigen either fell or were stable. In a further 26 per cent of patients the levels rose but much less quickly than before treatment started.

The company's research and development director, Dr Peter Lewis, said the tests needed to be completed before Marimastat was made available outside the company's trial programme.



Trial run: Pills being tested for dissolution at British Biotech's laboratory in Oxford

Photograph: John Lawrence

City scrambles for the next Glaxo

TOM STEVENSON

British Biotech is the sort of company that gets the stock-market its reputation for being little more than a casino. Its shares were worth just over £10 on Wednesday night, £15.50 by the close of trading on Thursday and £16.75 yesterday after touching £20.

One trade was reported at £25 at one point during the frenzy as investors scrambled to jump on the bandwagon - six times as much as the shares sold for at the beginning of the year.

The question exercising everyone's mind in the City was whether this was the next Glaxo, once a tiny research outfit and now Britain's biggest

company, or just another flash in the pan, lapped by savvy share dealers in make a profit before the turn at someone else's expense.

On the face of it nothing had really changed at the company except that it had announced some relatively promising results from tests on cancer patients of a new drug called Marimastat. There was also the prospect of further results this weekend from tests on another drug, codenamed BB-10010, which prevents damage to the immune system during chemotherapy.

How then could the business be worth £500m one day and £750m the next? At the beginning of the year the market had assigned a value of only about

£200m to exactly the same company.

The reason is that the City is ill-equipped to value businesses like British Biotech which have never made a profit.

Thursday's comments on the progress of the Marimastat tests accompanied a loss for the first half of the year of over £10m. When it comes to the flourishing biotechnology sector it's all about hope, the ultimate in what professional fund managers call blue sky investment.

Founded in 1986 when British Biotech's chief executive and chairman were made redundant from top research posts at a US drug firm, Searle, the company gained a stock-market quotation in 1992, riding

a wave of interest in the sector, one of the few commercial areas in which Britain excels.

It is Britain's biggest biotechnology company, and as such the market's biggest hope in its quest for the next Glaxo, the hugely successful drugs company that hit the headlines earlier this year when it took over Wellcome for a record £9bn.

Glaxo brought enormous financial gains to shareholders who hacked it 15 years ago before the launch of its blockbuster ulcer treatment, Zantac. Since the beginning of the 1980s the value of the company has soared a staggering 64 times so that it is now Britain's largest company by a wide margin, worth more than £30bn.

A relatively recent phenomenon in the UK, the market's enthusiasm for the biotechnology sector has a long tradition in the US where the largest company Amgen was a 1980s start up operation and is now valued at more than \$8bn (£5bn). For investors who pick the right stock the rewards can be almost limitless.

But British Biotech is also proof positive that when a company's shares are hyped so strongly in the City, the fall can be every bit as painful as the rise was exhilarating. Back in February, the company warned that tests on another cancer treatment, Batimastat, had been delayed and the market responded savagely, wiping away a quarter of the company's value in a single day.

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IN BRIEF

Man in court on kidnap charges

A man appeared in court yesterday charged with kidnapping two schoolgirls who went missing from their homes for three days.

The girls, 9 and 10, who cannot be named for legal reasons, were found alive and well by police on Wednesday night.

Andrew Brendon, 32, of Leicester, who was remanded in custody until 6 December at Leicester magistrates' court, was charged with two counts of kidnapping the girls and with possessing a .22 automatic pistol. He was also accused of possessing cannabis worth £50,000 and amphetamines worth £90,000.

'Mad cow' call

Pressure increased on the Secretary of State for Agriculture, Douglas Hogg, to tighten "mad cow disease" regulations after Professor Sir Bernard Tomlinson, a leading brain scientist and government adviser, warned that bovine spongiform encephalopathy could be transmitted to humans. Labour's agriculture spokesman, Gavin Stang, echoed his call for beef offal to be banned from the food chain.

Piper Alpha claim

A North Sea oil rig painter who saw his colleagues perish in the Piper Alpha disaster in 1988 lost his High Court claim that he suffered psychiatric damage. William Hegarty, 43, was aboard the support vessel which tried to aid the rig as it was destroyed by explosions; 167 people died.

'Cruel' HIV injection

A woman who injected her former boyfriend with her own HIV-infected blood was jailed at the Old Bailey for two years yesterday. World Aids Day, Mrs Justice Steel told Rhema Ndegwa, 25, who came from Uganda in 1993 seeking political asylum, that her crime was "deliberate, calculating and cruel".

Call to ban toy ads

Tony Banks, Labour MP for Newham North West, tabled a Commons motion blaming war toys for brutalising boys and encouraging aggressive behaviour in adult life. He says television advertisements for such toys should be banned.

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Barings Bank collapse: Singapore could seek extradition of alleged collaborators in disgraced trader's grand deception

Leeson points finger at bosses in clemency deal

STEPHEN VINES
Singapore

A number of senior executives at Barings Bank may face prosecution as a result of evidence given by the former futures trader Nick Leeson in return for lenient treatment.

"The bosses knew something was amiss but took no action," Leeson's lawyer, John Koh, told the court in Singapore yesterday. He said Leeson's immediate bosses, Simon Jones and James Bax, were aware of the fact that Leeson was hiding the extent of his trading losses from Coopers and Lybrand, Barings' auditors, as were many senior executives in London.

Mr Jones and Mr Bax remain in Singapore, where their passports are held by the authorities. Both men have been closely questioned by the financial crimes unit which is investigating the Barings collapse.

However, the most severe criticism in the Singaporean inspectors' report on the collapse is reserved for Peter Norris, the former chief executive officer of the Barings Investment Bank Group, who may face extradition from London.

In the ruthless free market of financial trading, Barings' com-

petitors punished the bank for its negligible controls and left Leeson with the responsibility of appearing before the court to determine his punishment, said Mr Koh.

Leeson has no reason to protect those who left him with this responsibility. It is clear that he will tell the authorities everything he knows about their role in unlawful activity at Barings.

Singapore needs his evidence because, as the independent inspectors' report - commissioned by the minister of finance - shows, there was little co-operation with either the Bank of England or senior Barings executives outside Singapore.

Leeson can fill in some of the gaps and be a witness with direct knowledge of events. This knowledge is the key to the bargain he has struck with the authorities in return for a reduced punishment.

Less important, but crucial, have been his lawyer's many references to Leeson's regret over having cast doubt on the impartiality of Singapore's legal system. The government is determined to ensure that the Barings fall-out does not damage the credibility of the island state as an international financial centre. Part of that credi-

bility depends on trust in the legal system.

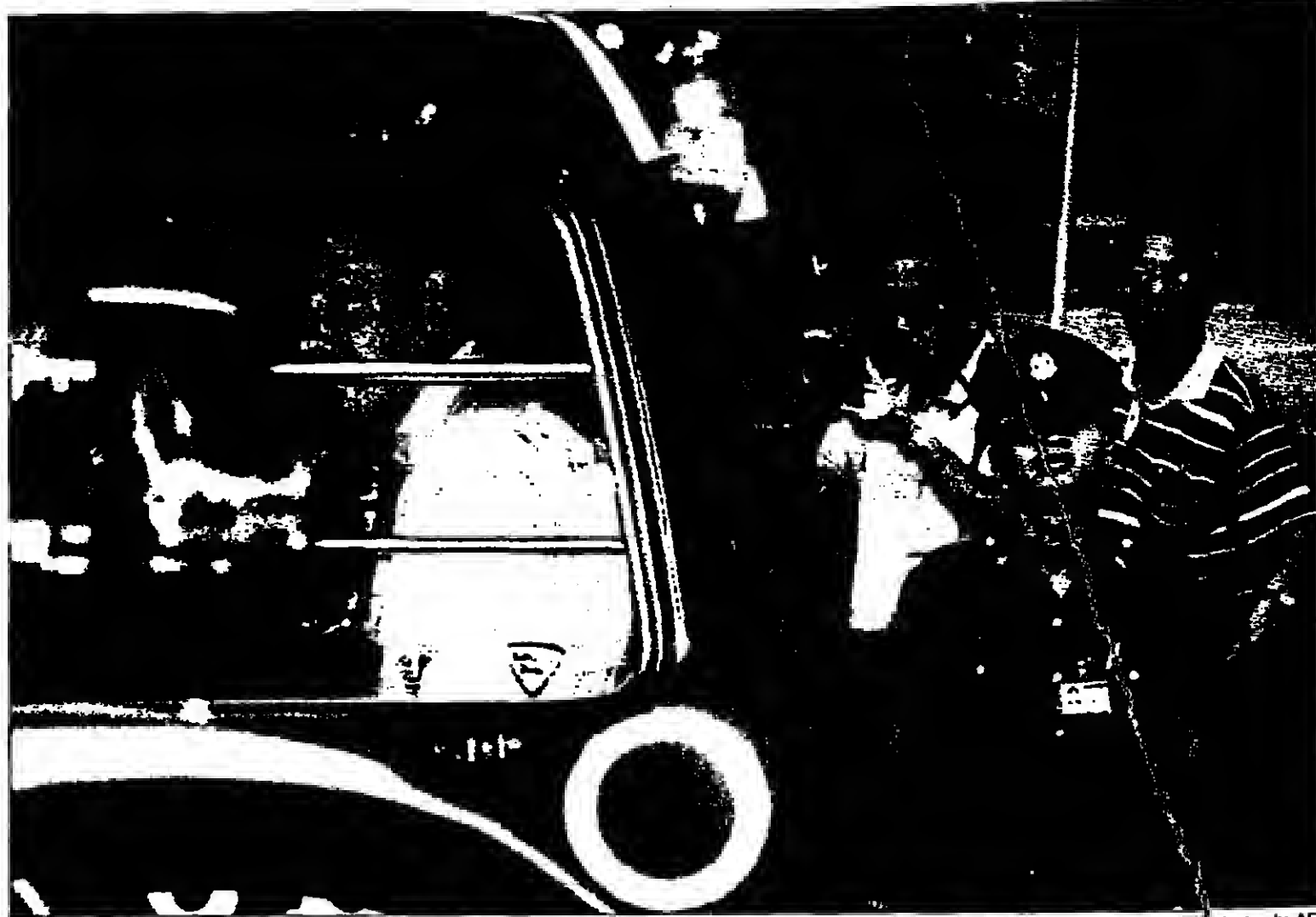
Even though Leeson has negotiated a deal for himself, it is clear that he was involved in criminal acts which went beyond simple financial manipulation.

Lawrence Ang, who led the prosecution's case in the trial, described in detail some of the ingenious ways in which Leeson hid the extent of his losses and managed to trick Barings' auditors into believing that his losses did not exist.

At the end of January 1995, Leeson was having trouble explaining the loss of 7.8bn yen (£50m), which he had tried to disguise by alleging that an American customer would be paying this sum back to Barings.

However there was no customer and there was no more cash (although Leeson forged letters from the customer stating that the cash would be paid). As the auditors closed in, he devised a plan to transfer the missing money from one Barings bank account to another, before swiftly moving it back to the account to which it belonged.

The purpose of this subterfuge was to obtain documentary evidence that the alleged debt had been repaid.



Cutting his losses: Nick Leeson arriving by prison van for yesterday's hearing at which he admitted two charges

Photograph: AFP

However, the statement which showed the payment, also showed the transfer, so Leeson set about cutting and pasting the bank statement to remove references to the transfer.

The cut and pasted statement was then photocopied and passed on to the auditors. The

original collage was found in Leeson's desk.

Meanwhile Leeson had identified the weak link in the reporting system of the Singapore International Monetary Exchange (Simex), which required futures traders to maintain a reserve account with the exchange

to protect the exchange against default. He saw that it was possible to key a false trade into the exchange's computer, which had no means of knowing whether it had actually been transacted. Once this was done the false Barings client's account making the loss could be said to

be in balance, therefore allowing Barings to recover almost \$115m (£75m) of its money held as security with Simex at a time when it was falling into deeper and deeper debt.

As for Leeson himself, he too is in debt, according to Mr Koh. He now has no assets, only

liabilities. The proceeds from his forthcoming book will go to the lawyers in Britain, Germany and Singapore, as well as his agent and ghost writer.

Mr Koh said Leeson made no profit from his reckless, unauthorised trading, he was simply trying to cover up losses.

Watford's different class of banker City panic changed to disbelief

MARY BRAID

From council house in downtown Watford to Singapore slayer of the Queen's bank - the class chasm between Nick Leeson and Barings was almost as great as the story as the lost £800m.

Singapore police and reporters chased Leeson to Malaysia after the scandal broke, rocking the world's financial markets. At home his shell-shocked family - his father Harry, a plasterer, and his three younger brothers and sisters -

were also being pursued to provide a picture of the working-class boy who broke Britain's oldest merchant bank.

From Watford and Singapore emerged two very different profiles. At the local Farmers' School they were stunned by the former project's now-found notoriety. Nick was remembered as "quiet" dependable and steady. Failing A-level maths proved no obstacle to a career in banking. He left school to work for Coutts before joining Barings in 1990.

In 1992 he married Lisa.

When the news broke his stunned father-in-law Alex Simms was loyal. Nick, he claimed, was a sensible lad. He was sure he was innocent.

But colleagues and acquaintances in Singapore said Leeson was arrogant and flashy. At school he was regarded as a miracle worker, the man who took risks and could not lose. "He seemed to be able to move markets," remembered one fellow trader.

The cocky trader image was one Leeson sought hard to shed. In an interview with David Frost he played down the "ex-

travagance" of his old Singapore lifestyle and reports of luxury apartments and personal yachts.

Last month, however, when Leeson was reeled back in to Singapore it was the arrogant Nick - broad grin under the reversed baseball cap - that reappeared. But surely the other Nick was hiding beneath the hubris. For the horror of his situation must have long sunk home and Singaporean justice will not look lightly on a man it considers to have damaged the squeaky-clean image of its financial centre.

JOHN EISENHAMMER
Financial Editor

The Barings catastrophe provoked panic among City investment banks. But they were less worried that others would be brought low by the contagion of collapse, than suffering an eruption of the fear that stalks every high-risk taking financial business - are we next?

Barings collapsed not just because a young trader halfway across the world bet more than twice the capital of the bank on bare-brained derivatives spec-

ulation, but because Barings' entire risk management system failed to spot what was going on.

The big trading houses spend fortunes on sophisticated computer technology and specialist departments whose vital daily task is to monitor and control the risks involved, as billions of pounds change hands, and to ensure that no single trader steps out of line.

Suddenly, every bank felt terribly vulnerable. "Just days after the Barings collapse we had to present ourselves to the Barclays board and explain how this

just could not happen here," says Graham Newall, chief executive of futures at BZW, Barclays investment bank. "We really believed that, but when we came back, we had to put our hands on our hearts and say, how can we be so sure?"

"Nobody slept well in the days immediately following Barings," said the head of risk management at another City investment bank. "There was a frenzied rush to make sure that every bankers worst nightmare could not happen here."

As more details seeped out

about how Barings collapsed, the less threatening it appeared for other finance houses. Even to this day, senior bankers in the City shake their heads in utter disbelief at how Britain's oldest merchant bank managed to run a securities business with such a total lack of the most rudimentary checks. The reports by both the Bank of England's investigators and those of the Singapore authorities painted a garish picture of rampant managerial arrogance and incompetence, which Nick Leeson exploited with apparent ease.

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صبرنا عن الاكل

MP denies threatening to kill wife with knife

REBECCA FOWLER

David Ashby, the Tory MP, denied to a jury yesterday that he threatened to kill his wife with a carving knife, and accused her of being obsessed with media attention following the exposure of the failure of their marriage.

Mr Ashby, MP for Leicestershire North West, also denied he threatened to shoot his wife, Silvana, on fire with a cigarette lighter and dismissed allegations he picked up a knife to attack her when she visited his home in Leicester, where he was staying with a male friend.

"She was coming at me and attacking me, and I pushed her away," Mr Ashby said. "She phoned the police, and I was horrified by that. She'd been standing there saying 'help, help, he's attacking me'."

Mr Ashby burst into tears at the High Court on the fifth day of giving evidence in his libel case against the *Sunday Times* and Andrew Neil, its former editor, following allegations that he is homosexual.

As Mr Ashby, 55, recalled the day in January 1993 when the newspaper published the article, which alleged Silvana Ashby, 52, his Italian wife, was furious he had left her and moved to live close to another man, he broke down.

"It was absolutely dreadful. I had no control over it," Mr Ashby said. "It was my wife on one hand alternating between rages... the press hammering at the door, the telephone ringing, the pack howling at the gates."

But Mr Ashby said when he asked his daughter Alex, 27, to come home and "rescue" him,

Mrs Ashby lost her temper again. He claimed she did not want a friend of Alex's, Suzie, to pick her up from the airport because it would divert attention from her.

"She said all they wanted to do was grab the limelight, arrive in a taxi and prance in front of the cameras," Mr Ashby said. "My wife seemed obsessed by the limelight."

Although Mr Ashby agrees he shared a double bed in a French chateau hotel with Dr Claran Kilduff, 32, his neighbour in Putney, south-west London, he denied that they shared each other's beds there and dismissed allegations they had homosexual relations.

Richard Hartley QC, for the *Sunday Times*, said it would be unrealistic to say how intimate the men were, but it was a homosexual relationship.

"You and Dr Kilduff shared a degree of physical intimacy as part of your homosexual affection for each other, and in pursuance of the homosexual affair," Mr Hartley said. "It could have been kissing and cuddling."

Mr Ashby later claimed he did not spend a night at Dr Kilduff's flat because he was tending to the family dogs.

When Mr Hartley accused Mr Ashby of sending a blackmail letter to his wife, telling her not to give evidence at the trial, he broke down in tears again, and claimed he was protecting his wife's dignity.

"What is the world thinking of my wife now, in the press all the time," he said. "I tried to speak to her. I didn't want it to happen."

The case continues.

Leah Betts' funeral hears of father's pride and love



'Little ship' lost: The Rev Don Gordon leading the procession as Leah's coffin was carried out of Christ Church

Photograph: Edward Webb

The father of Leah Betts, who died last month after taking an ecstasy tablet on her 18th birthday, paid tribute to his "pretty little ship" at her funeral service yesterday.

In a moving address at Christ Church in Letchington, Essex, Paul Betts spoke of his pride and love for his daughter and described how he taught her how to deal with the world.

Comparing himself to a ship's captain the former policeman said: "He thought that he had prepared the little ship for anything that the sea could throw at it... he trusted it with all his heart and believed that wherever it went it would return safely."

"All of a sudden a gigantic wave lifted the little ship into the air and tossed it on to jagged rocks... His little ship was lost and would never again sail the sea," he said.

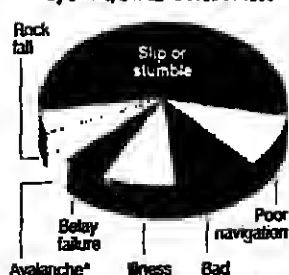
Family, friends and dozens of teenagers were among the congregation. Many stood outside the church, listening to service taken by the Rev Don Gordon broadcast on speakers.

Leah was later buried alongside her mother, Dorothy, at St Mary Magdalen church Great Burstead, Essex.

Mountaineers defend risks in the Highlands

Mountaineering casualties and accidents

by cause, Scotland 1989 to 1993



*In winter only avalanches become the second greatest cause of casualties

Occupation	Total	Fatalities
Student	98	8
Retired**	67	18
Engineer	31	4
School child	30	7
Teacher	30	6
Housewife	26	0
Unemployed	27	4
Forces	26	6

**60% of retired's fatalities were due to pre-existing medical conditions

STEPHEN GOODWIN

With the first snow having already fallen on the Scottish hills, the British Mountaineering Council took pre-emptive action yesterday, pointing out the pleasures and pitfalls of its sport before the inevitable crop of winter accidents.

A good winter in mountaineering terms - a decent cover of snow and ice and the weather to get out on it - will mean more deaths. Past statistics suggest that about 20 mountaineers will be killed in the Highlands this winter.

Just as predictably, their deaths will be followed by calls for a ban on climbers taking to the hills in "bad" weather, for compulsory rescue insurance and for certificates of competence.

The BMC rejects all such restrictions. "For the mountaineer the most important freedom is to be able to take risks," said Doug Scott, the council's vice-president, a man who has courted the fine edge for decades from the Highlands to the Himalayas and suffered serious injury.

"Those reacting in knee-jerk fashion to highly publicised mountaineering accidents have simply failed to see that there is a success story writ large over our hills every winter, when thousands of walkers and climbers safely and competently deal with all the hazards and enjoy the freedom of the mountains," Mr Scott said.

Contrary to the winter crop of newspaper headlines, statistics suggest that the number of incidents is falling as a proportion of the increasing numbers taking to the hills for recreation.

The proportion of incidents resulting in fatalities has also fallen,

partly as a result of better protective clothing stopping people simply freezing to death.

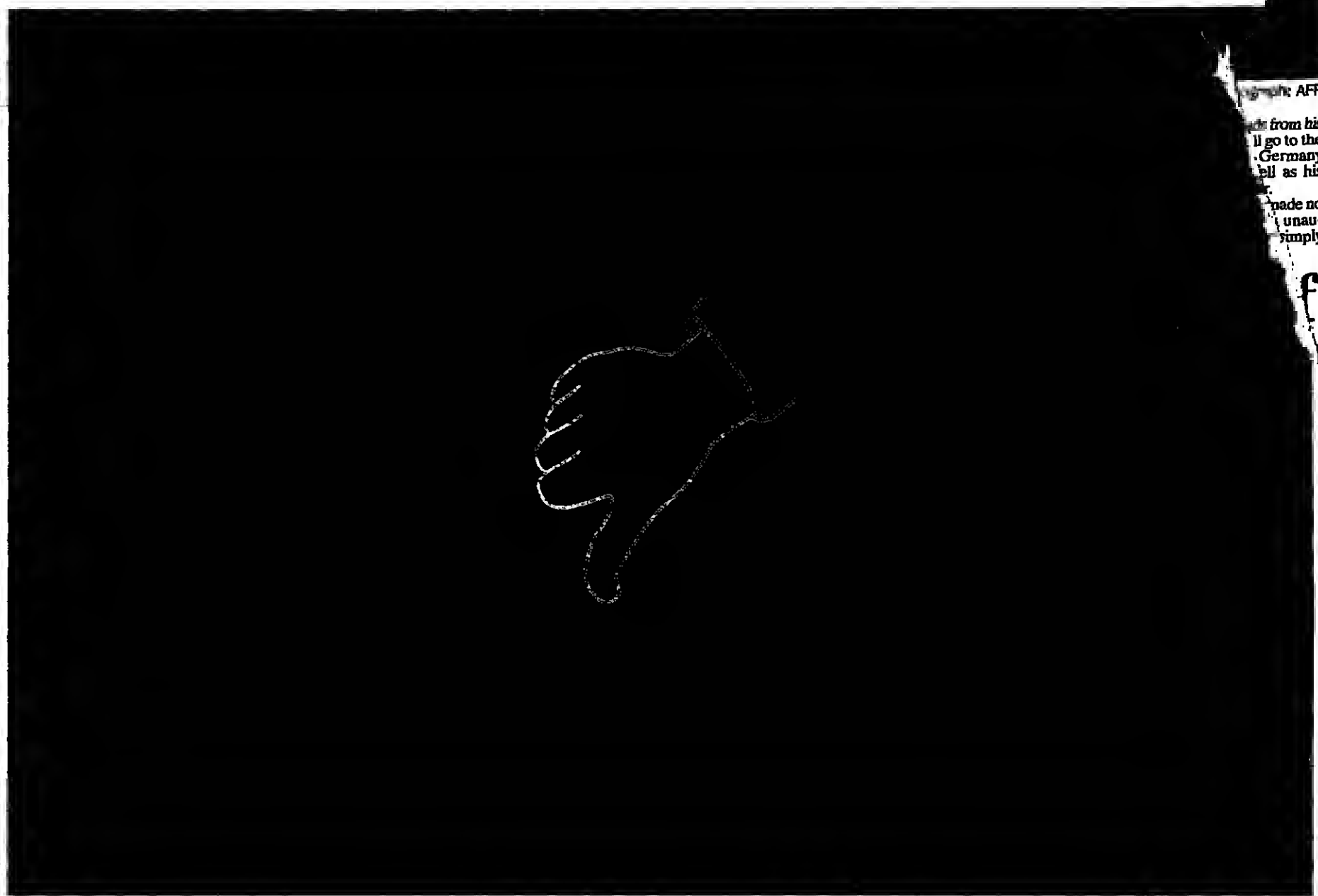
Nonetheless the risk is real enough. In the winter months of 1994 (January to April and October to December) on Lochnagar, a popular winter climbing area south of Braemar in the Grampians, there were 63 incidents with 15 deaths. In the first three months of this year there were two deaths in 16 incidents.

Though the image of winter mountaineering is of a climber with ice axes and crampons on a desperate ice face, by far the commonest cause of accidents is a simple slip or stumble, often while descending on easy ground. In winter, avalanches become the second greatest cause. The statistics reinforce the BMC's case that there is no such thing as winter hill walking, only winter mountaineering.

Yesterday's London press briefing, supported by Chris Bonington, president-elect of the Alpine Club, and Ian McNaught-Davis, president of the world body for mountaineering (UIAA), was intended to put the risk into perspective, counter the calls of "misguided and alarmist politicians" for regulation, and emphasise the need for climbers to hone their winter skills.

The BMC represents clubs with a combined membership of some 35,000 - perhaps a third of the British climbing fraternity. Its president, Paul Nunn, was killed in the Karakoram, Pakistan, in August.

However, perverse it might seem to the non-practitioner, the vast majority of climbers share the view of Mr McNaught-Davis: "If you extract the risk from climbing there wouldn't be a sport at all."



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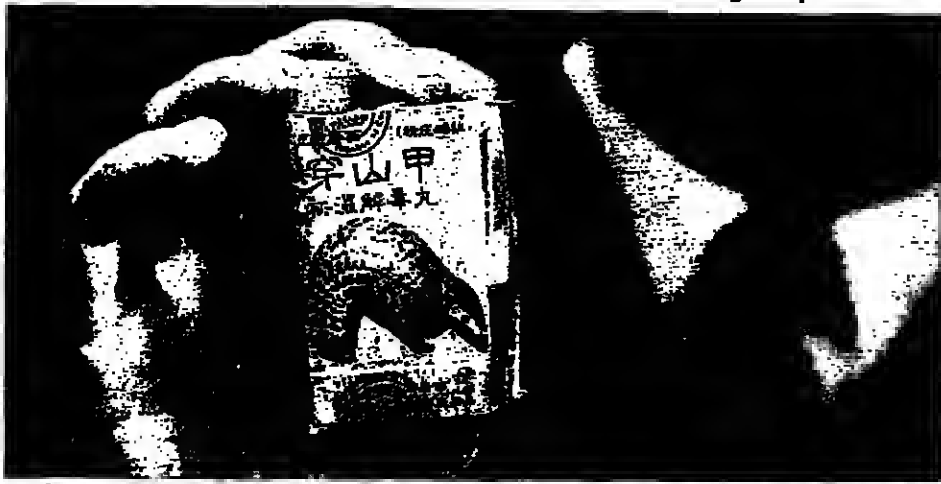
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news

Raid hits trade in endangered species

Seized medicines allegedly made from parts of tigers, rhino, bears and tortoises. Louise Jury reports



Trade war: One of the packets of seized Chinese medicines. Photograph: Edward Sykes

Chinese medicines allegedly made from parts of tigers, rhinoceroses, bears and tortoises were being tested yesterday after detectives seized large quantities in a raid on a warehouse. Officers investigating the illegal trade in endangered species raided the west London warehouse, described as the "small airport hangar", a second prong of an off-against the trade. A lorry-load of products was taken away for analysis and, which was carried out yesterday at the same police questioned suppliers in Hong Kong, manager has been re- for possible offences in of the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES) to which this is a signatory.

The move follows an operation in February when products from threatened animals were seized from shops in London, Greater Manchester and the West Midlands. Two London shop-owners were fined £3,000 and £2,000 respectively and ordered to pay costs. Inspector John Francis, the Metropolitan Police's senior wildlife officer, and PC Dave Cove said they believed the warehouse was a major supplier for the south-east of England. The valuable raw animal products, such as bear bile and tiger bone, sell for up to £200 an ounce, making the haul worth thousands. Wildlife organisations, which have been consulted about the Metropolitan Police initiative, codenamed Operation Charm, welcomed the action.

Bobbie Jo Kelso, of Traffic, which monitors the trade in co-operation with the Cites Secretariat, said: "We're really pleased that things were found because we think every item counts. But we're particularly pleased that a lot less was found than in February." The world-wide trade was "absolutely huge" but it appeared that traders in Britain were deciding the police operation made it not worth the risk, she said. Lucy Farmer, of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), said it was good that police were taking the problem seriously. "This illegal trade is threatening animals, like tigers, with imminent extinction. Unless the trade can be stopped, there is no future for animals like tigers."

Animal cures: their origins and claims made for them				
	Rhinoceros	Saiga Antelope	Tiger	Bear
Part of animal used	Rhino horn allegedly in traditional Chinese medicine. Rhinoceros horn is used in traditional Chinese medicine.	Saiga horn is used in traditional Chinese medicine. Saiga horn is used in traditional Chinese medicine.	Tiger bone is used in traditional Chinese medicine. Tiger bone is used in traditional Chinese medicine.	Bear bile is used in traditional Chinese medicine. Bear bile is used in traditional Chinese medicine.
What it does	Rhino horn is a valuable ingredient in traditional Chinese medicine. Rhino horn is a valuable ingredient in traditional Chinese medicine.	Saiga horn is used in traditional Chinese medicine. Saiga horn is used in traditional Chinese medicine.	Tiger bone is used in traditional Chinese medicine. Tiger bone is used in traditional Chinese medicine.	Bear bile is used in traditional Chinese medicine. Bear bile is used in traditional Chinese medicine.
Population of animal	Total population now around 10,000 including more than 400 in zoos. In 1970, black rhinos may have numbered 65,000 in sub-Saharan Africa and were the most numerous of the five species. Today only about 2,500 are left.	The worldwide population is estimated at 100,000. In 1970, there were about 1,000,000. Large poaching has been a problem since the 1970s. In 1990, only 350 were left.	There are about 1,000 tigers left in the world. In 1970, there were about 10,000. Large poaching has been a problem since the 1970s. In 1990, only 350 were left.	There are about 1,000 bears left in the world. In 1970, there were about 10,000. Large poaching has been a problem since the 1970s. In 1990, only 350 were left.
Where they are found	Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa	Central Asia, Eastern Europe	South Asia, Southeast Asia	North America, Europe, Asia

Chinese remedies are rooted in 4,000 years of tradition, but growing Western interest in alternative medicines has increased the threat to animal and plant species.

Products taken on Thursday included some using the root and seed pods of a rare orchid not previously known to environmental investigators for its use in Chinese medicine.

It is an offence not only to sell or keep for sale products on the Cites banned lists, but also any reporting to contain them - even if they do not. Many of the products taken from the warehouse do not have an English description of what they do. Where they have one, they have been covered with a sticker stating: "No medical claims are made for this product."

house do not have an English description of what they do. Where they have one, they have been covered with a sticker stating: "No medical claims are made for this product."

'Pay beds' yield the NHS £300 profit per patient

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

The National Health Service is making a profit of almost £300 for each private patient it treats, moody that can be ploughed back into treating more NHS patients, according to the first detailed independent study of whether the NHS is subsidising private patients or making money from them. Even if "hidden" costs are taken into account - the cost to the public sector of training doctors and nurses, unexpected

admissions to NHS intensive care, and loss of consultants' time to the NHS - pay-bed units are still making an average profit of £235 a case, the study concluded. Multiplied up across all pay-bed activity, that is enough to keep a 250-bed NHS acute hospital in business, according to David Cavers, managing director of Norwich Union Healthcare, which sponsored the study. The study was carried out by National Economic Research Associates, an independent firm of consultants, who examined

the accounts of six NHS hospitals whose pay beds accounted for an 11 per cent sample of dedicated pay-bed units. Although a sample survey, it represents the most detailed examination yet of whether the NHS gains financially or not from treating private patients. Independent hospitals - with which pay-bed units are in direct competition - have long argued that the NHS subsidises private patients. And yesterday the Independent Healthcare Association underlined that stance by calling for proper regulation of

pay-bed units and transparently audited accounts of private care. The study comes as the NHS is taking an increasing share - now up to 15 per cent - of the private-patient market at the expense of private and independent hospitals. With extra pay beds forming part of many of the new private finance deals, that share is likely to grow. Most of the pay-bed units overestimated the "profit" they made, according to NERA's study. None the less, their average revenue was £1,710 per private patient, and their average

treatment cost £1,400, including the return on capital which the hospitals have to make. That £310 surplus should be adjusted down to allow for junior doctors' time, the study says - an estimated cost of £19. That left a financial surplus of £290 per patient. In a more pessimistic scenario, NERA says, a further £56 should be knocked off to allow for lost consultant time (£12), unplanned intensive care (£8), training of nurses (£24) and training of doctors (£12). That still left a £235 surplus.

Not all six units were equally profitable. Their surplus, after allowing for junior doctors' time, ranged from £30 to £690, but all made a surplus. The average gain of £290 per patient, "would represent around £170,000 for each £1m of private patient revenue," the study concludes. Pay beds may well be more profitable than private hospitals - in part because their occupancy rates are higher at 60 per cent, against 53 per cent for private hospitals. Shared facilities with the NHS - use of operating

theatres, for example - may also provide economies of scale, the study says. The Independent Healthcare Association yesterday called for a moratorium on new pay-bed units until NHS private-patient activity was properly audited. The association also queried whether the use of government funds to allow the NHS to compete against private hospitals was legitimate. **Are Pay-Beds Profitable?** Norwich Union Healthcare, Chilworth House, Templars Way, Eastleigh, SO53 3RY, Free.

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France at a standstill: Franc battered by eighth day of stoppages and protests against Chirac's welfare reforms

Strikers invade the runways at Orly

TONY BARBER
Europe Editor

France's worst labour unrest since 1986 spread to Orly airport in Paris yesterday when 200 Air France ground personnel occupied two runways, stopping planes from landing and halting domestic and transatlantic departures. It was the first time that air traffic had been disrupted since public-sector workers and students launched a wave of strikes and demonstrations eight days ago in protest at the government's plan to reform the welfare state and curb state spending. "France needs to work. Our economy is still convalescent. The government is determined to carry out the reforms it has announced, because it is a question of survival," the government spokesman, Alain Lamassourie, said in a statement warning that many companies would start to lay off workers if the strikes continued.

President Jacques Chirac's government must implement its austerity programme if France is to reduce its budget deficit sufficiently to meet the Maastricht treaty's conditions for joining a single European currency in 1999. French stocks and bonds slumped yesterday and the franc fell a centime to 3.4625 to the Mark as financial markets weighed the impact of the strikes on France's chances of meeting the criteria on time. Even before dawn, the Paris region was locked in traffic

jams that extended for more than 200 miles as commuters sought a way round the strikes paralysing public-transport systems. The state rail network was almost completely shut down, there were no buses or Métro services in the capital, and thousands of Parisians cycled, roller-skated and walked to work.

The social unrest turned violent on Thursday night when about 30 people were injured in clashes in Paris and the western city of Nantes between riot police and youths throwing stones and petrol bombs. The clashes broke out on the fringes of protests organised by students who are demanding more resources for underfunded, overcrowded universities.

Employees in the education and health sectors are set to join the strikes on Monday, along with tax officials, customs staff and workers in the telecommunications industry. Unions at the Bank of France have called out its 20,000 staff for a two-day strike next Thursday and Friday.

Government officials said they had no intention yet of mobilising the army to help Parisians overcome the transport strikes. During a similar crisis in 1988, the authorities used 350 army trucks to take people around the city.

With the strikes breaking out so close to Christmas, Mr Chirac and his Prime Minister, Alain Juppé, may be calculating that public exasperation will increase to the point where union leaders will feel com-

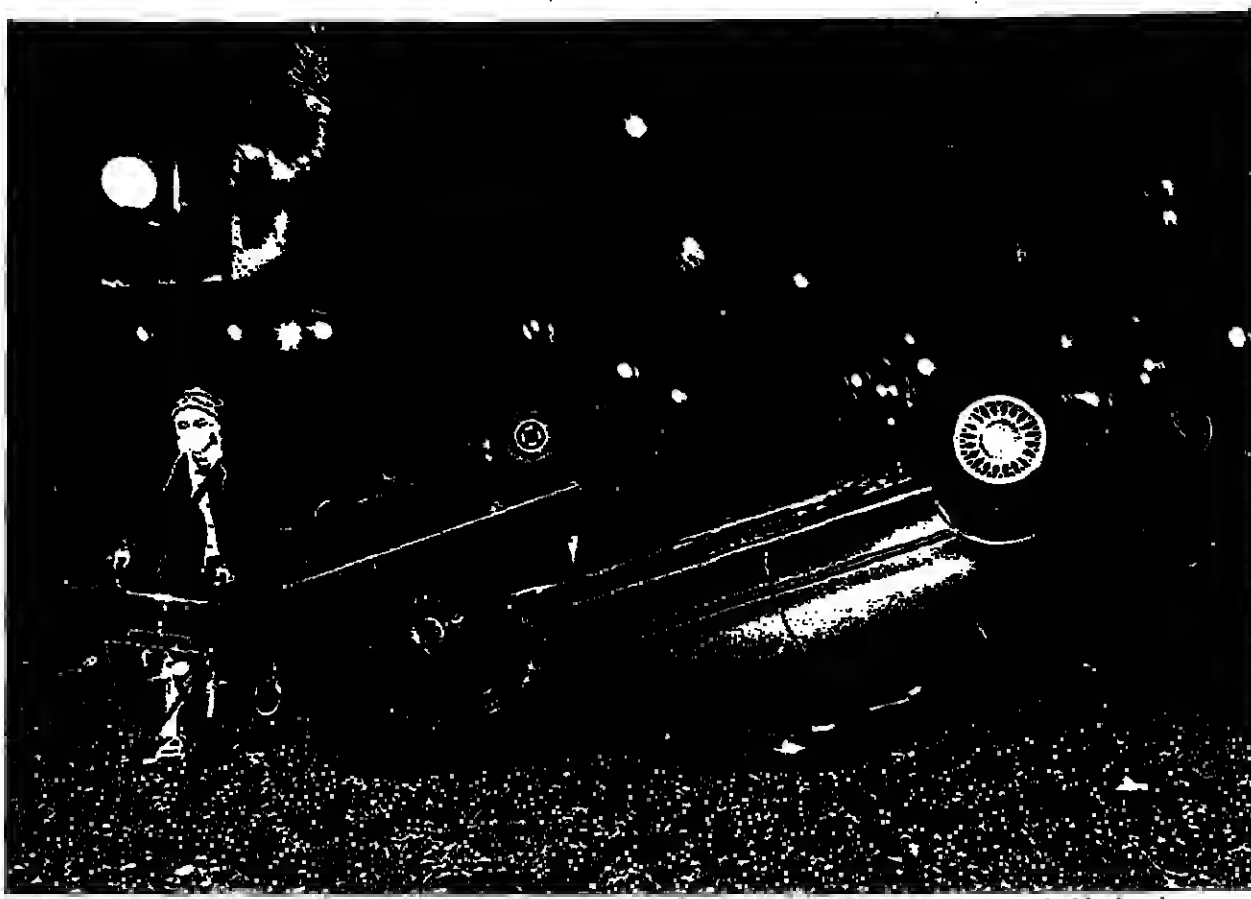
pelled to call off their protests. The President has the power to dissolve the National Assembly and call a snap election or referendum on his policies, but his aides say such extreme action is unnecessary at the moment.

Government officials say that, while it may be possible to make more money available for universities, there must be no watering down of the plans announced by Mr Juppé last month for a fundamental overhaul of the social-security system. The system pays for health care, pensions and family allowances and, like the SNCF state railway network, is buried under a mountain of debt.

The government's aim is to restore order to the public finances so that the budget deficit falls to 4 per cent of Gross Domestic Product next year and 3 per cent in 1997, enabling France to qualify for European monetary union. But the government's ability to meet these targets depends on the accuracy of its predictions for economic growth, and most economists believe these are too optimistic.

The government has forecast 2.9 per cent growth this year and 2.8 per cent in 1996, but few independent economists believe that growth will exceed 2.5 per cent this year and 2 per cent in 1996. The latest strikes are certain to weaken the economy by depressing output and could even result in a contraction of GDP for the last quarter of 1995.

All this means that the government may have to announce



Evasive action: A cyclist avoids cars overturned by young people after university students protested in Jussieu

still tougher austerity measures to meet its budget-deficit targets, a policy that runs the risk of provoking even more extensive labour unrest. "The risk remains that the austerity

package will depress private spending more than expected, making deficit reduction even more difficult," said Jean-François Mercier, an economist at Salomon Brothers.

France's determination to meet the Maastricht conditions and launch the single currency on schedule also implies delaying an assault on unemployment, currently at 11.5

per cent. Mr Chirac won the election on a pledge to make job creation his priority, but switched course in late October to a strict diet of budgetary discipline.

IN BRIEF

Soldiers arrested over bomb attack

Buenos Aires - The Argentine authorities raided the country's largest military base and arrested about a dozen people, including several soldiers, in connection with the 1994 car-bomb attack on a Jewish cultural centre in which 86 people were killed. Local media said the raid on the Campo de Mayo barracks, on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, was ordered after arms caches were found near by.

Aids test conviction
Koblenz - A court in Germany convicted three executives of the UB Plasma company and a laboratory assistant of distributing shoddy tested blood products, infecting at least three people with the HIV virus, which causes Aids.

Author acquitted

Istanbul - A Turkish security court acquitted Yasar Kemal, one of the country's best-known authors, who was charged with "provoking hatred and enmity" in an article for *Der Spiegel* magazine in Germany. In it he accused the authorities of "a campaign of lies" to hide systematic oppression, particularly of the Kurds.

Aid for dissidents

Cairo - King Hussein of Jordan has promised to help exiled Iraqi dissidents try to topple Saddam Hussein, but urged them to unite first, Iraqi opposition leaders say.

Aristide to marry

Port-au-Prince - Haiti's President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the priest-turned-politician who outraged the Vatican with his fiery activism, has made another breach with his religious past: He says he is getting married. He did not name his fiancée nor the date of the wedding, but sources said his future bride is Mildred Trouillot, a Haitian-American lawyer who works in the Haitian Embassy in Washington.

Castro dons suit

Peking - The Cuban president, Fidel Castro, shed his military fatigues in favour of a dark suit to talk business with the Chinese Prime Minister, Li Peng. Mr Castro also greeted Mr Li with a simple handshake, eschewing the old-style socialist bear hug with which he greeted the Chinese Communist Party chief and President, Jiang Zemin, on Thursday.

Strike at 'Liberation'

Paris - The French daily *Liberation*, once the cult newspaper of a generation of left-wingers, plans to shed a quarter of its staff next year in a fresh attempt to stem losses. The newspaper's journalists, who would bear two-thirds of the 95 redundancies, have called a strike on Monday to oppose the proposed cuts.

New smoking bans

Singapore - Singapore, which already had the toughest anti-smoking laws in Asia, has tightened them further. Lighting up is now banned in air-conditioned shopping malls, pedestrian underpasses and outdoor public places where two or more people stand in queues, such as bus stops.

Second panda birth

Peking - Qingqing, a 19-year-old resident of the Giant Panda Research Center in China's Fujian province, has given birth for the second year in succession, even though most female pandas in captivity become infertile at about 16.

China slams Patten as 'big spender'

STEVE CRAWSHAW
London and
TERESA POOLE
Peking

Britain took the unusual step of summoning the acting Chinese ambassador after the Communists had complained that the British Governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten, had allowed welfare spending in the colony to rise too high.

Mr Patten was always known as a political "wet" in the Conservative Party. But even he probably never expected a shades-of-Thatcher attack from such an unlikely quarter. After all, Mr Patten last hit the headlines in Britain with a speech saying that Western governments should scale back public spending and follow the example of East Asian economies - such as Hong Kong.

Chen Zuo'er, head of the budget team working with Britain on the colony's 1997 handover to China, described Mr Patten as a "big spender". Britain responded by summoning the Chinese chargé d'affaires in London, Wang Qi Liang, for a diplomatic slap on the wrist.

Mr Chen had declared: "Since the arrival of this Governor, welfare spending has suddenly become a Formula One car. If it runs at the present speed, for not too long, it will crash and kill. On board this car are 6 million people (in Hong Kong)." Mr Patten, he said, was "a big spender" who was "not qualified to speak".

Andrew Burns, Deputy Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, expressed concern "at behaviour which could be construed as interference with the promised level of autonomy for Hong Kong". He objected to "personal abuse of the Governor which was unacceptable to the British Government".

The Chinese embassy issued a statement which noted that Mr Patten was the "plenipotentiary of Her Majesty the Queen", and that the Chinese government and officials "are clear about and respect" this position. After the summoning of Mr Wang, British officials sought to play down the mini-drama, insisting that this was "not a rebuke". It was, however, "unhelpful [for the Chinese] to start rocking the boat".

In reacting to remarks by a middle-ranking official, Britain is serving notice that Peking must respect Hong Kong's autonomy as a future "Special Administrative Region" of China. After June 1997, when Hong Kong reverts to China, policies such as welfare spending are supposed to be decided by the Hong Kong government and legislature, not Peking, under the "one country, two systems" principle. A furious Mr Patten retorted this week: "People should leave us to drive our own car."

Hong Kong officials yesterday suggested that the British

expression of displeasure was welcome. But belated. "It's about time. There's been too little of that," one official said.

Peking is convinced Britain wants Hong Kong to spend as much money as possible before 1997, and plans to leave its ex-colony with heavy budget commitments. Mr Chen said that welfare spending had surged by two-thirds over the past five years. He criticised one Hong Kong official's pledge that wel-



'Big spender': Chris Patten, Governor of Hong Kong

fare would reach "First World" levels over the next five years.

This latest row follows alarm in the colony about reports that China plans to set up a shadow government for Hong Kong before 1997, in a bid to influence policy and undermine the existing administration.

Hong Kong has an ageing population, which is putting greater strain on public spending. But over the past decade, economic growth has also made more resources available.

Kay Ku Yin-kay, the acting director of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, said welfare spending was only 1.5 per cent of Gross Domestic Product and added: "Such a wealthy society as Hong Kong can afford it." In China, by contrast, people have seen their former welfare safety net swiftly eroded over the past decade as economic reform has shattered the old "iron rice bowl" cradle-to-grave welfare system.

Hong Kong officials argued yesterday that "Peking's bark is sometimes worse than its bite", and that the rude tone should not necessarily be seen as a harbinger of things to come.

The message from China to Hong Kong's civil servants was clear, one official said. "They're saying: 'In future, we're your masters.'" Even from Peking's point of view, this may be a dangerous form of brinkmanship. China can scarcely want Hong Kong's civil servants to desert en masse.

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Bosnia peace deal: As troops prepare to leave, Sarajevo's French commander attacks US motives and raises fears for Serbs



False alarm: Bosnian Serb police detain blindfolded men arrested near the front line. They turned out to be Serbs

Photograph: Reuters

Nato to deploy advance force

KURT SCHORK
Reuters

Sarajevo — Nato agreed yesterday to send the first 2000 troops of a 60,000-strong force to police a Bosnia peace settlement, but the UN commander for Sarajevo openly criticised the deal and warned it might be unworkable.

Nato ambassadors meeting in Brussels agreed to dispatch an "enabling force" of American, French and British troops who are expected to start arriving in Bosnia early next week to check that roads and airfields can take heavy military traffic.

The Nato decision came after a major obstacle to the participation of 20,000 American troops in the force was removed when the Senate Republican leader, Bob Dole, gave his reluctant backing in Washington. Mr Dole announced he was drafting a resolution of support for the Bosnia mission.

But the French UN commander for Sarajevo, General

Jean-René Bachelet, said the deal brokered in Dayton, Ohio, by the US government had been forced through to promote President Bill Clinton's re-election campaign.

The general also attacked a clause bringing Serb suburbs of Sarajevo under the control of the Muslim-Croat government. General Bachelet said Sarajevo Serbs would flee in their thousands, burning their homes. "We would then watch French soldiers on television screens directing traffic while houses are burning," he said.

Bosnian Serb sources in Pale yesterday said Serb civilians have begun leaving suburbs to be handed over but described it as a trickle rather than a rush.

General Bachelet accused chief US negotiator Richard Holbrooke of seeking "to obtain at whatever cost an agreement to serve the electoral interests of an American candidate".

However, a UN spokesman in Sarajevo, Alexander Ivanko, said: "We at the higher com-

mand fully support the Dayton agreement".

It was the second time that France has questioned the Dayton pact. On Wednesday, President Jacques Chirac was reported to have written to Mr Clinton demanding guarantees for the Serbs living in Sarajevo.

A French newspaper said yesterday that the Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, had offered Paris help in freeing two detained French airmen in exchange for its support for a better deal for Sarajevo's Serbs. *Le Figaro* quoted Italian writer Daniel Salvatore Schiffer, a go-between for Bosnian Serbs in the past, as saying: "Karadzic thinks he has a good chance of achieving the release of the pilots if Jacques Chirac makes a positive gesture".

A Foreign Ministry official in Paris insisted yesterday that there was no connection between Mr Chirac's letter to Mr Clinton and the fate of the missing flyers, shot down over Serb-held Bosnia in August.

Toddlers who crave love and cuddles

EMMA DALY
Tuzla

As orphanages go, Nasa Djeta seems a warm and friendly place: a few toys lie scattered about, a few pictures — abstract expressions from the under-fives — are pinned to the walls. But the 40 children who live in three rooms above a kindergarten in the industrial town of Tuzla, in northern Bosnia, are starved of love and attention, traumatised by living through nearly four years of war and domestic conflict.

"The children have nothing," Melika Alijefendic, director of Nasa Djeta (Our Children), said. "We need so much for a normal life — a television and video, a car, a doctor..."

At present, the children are isolated at the home because they have no transport — even for trips to the hospital — and money for food will run out at the end of the year.

The charity War Child, founded in 1993 by two filmmakers (and parents) horrified by what they saw while covering the Croatian war, plans to supply food and a vehicle for the next year, with money raised from *Independent* readers. Funding the orphanage for 12 months will cost £80,000, and will ensure the children at least have a place to call home.

"There is a great difference between our children and those from the kindergarten: here it's almost impossible to keep any kind of order when food comes or visitors arrive. They want and need a bit more love," Jasminka Sinanovic explained.

Ms Sinanovic, a nurse, looks after the oldest group — three- to five-year-olds — who live in a large, cheerful room filled with furniture to scale: tiny tables and chairs, a row of miniature beds. There are a few toys and murals on the wall, small lockers and cups named for each child.



The women working at Nasa Djeta frequently hug the children. There are a few toys and murals on the wall, small lockers and cups named for each child. But there is the same, inevitable and desperate need among the children for affection and attention.

"Iliq, a small blond boy, was cradled in the translator's arms. No one is sure what happened to his family, but they know he arrived at the orphanage as a tiny baby from the town of Brcko, which had fallen to the Serbs. Nirvana, dark and silent, is here with her sister because both her parents are in an asylum.

"They are not all orphans — some have been abandoned, or perhaps the mother is dead and the father in the army," Ms Alijefendic said. "One child's mother was raped [by Serb soldiers]. She did not abandon him, but her brothers, her family, would not let her bring the child home... so he is here."

The mother is able to visit only occasionally. But another woman did return to the orphanage recently to claim her son. "I think she was raped too," Ms Alijefendic said. "She has found a job, so she is able to raise her child."

Over the past couple of years the orphanage has managed to place around 30 children with adoptive parents, but new arrivals appear all too often.

One small girl whispers the word "mama" — every strange adult who appears is "mother" or "father" to these children, a triumph, for the majority, of hope over experience.



Reunited: Besir Jolic plays with his son Amir (right) and his niece Belma, 2, after a four-year separation. Belma's father died escaping from Srebrenica

Photograph: Kevin Weaver

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Halifax
8.2% APR
(variable)

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international

Alliance leadership: New Secretary-General faces crucial tests over Bosnia, expanding to the East and forging new ties with the EU

Spanish joy as Solana wins Nato job

ELIZABETH NASH
Madrid
TONY BARBER
London

Spain's Foreign Minister, Javier Solana, was named yesterday as Nato's new Secretary-General, ending six weeks of embarrassing uncertainty over who should head the world's strongest military alliance.

Diplomats in Brussels said a consensus had formed around Mr Solana as the best man to replace Willy Claes, who resigned in October because of a corruption scandal in his native

Belgium. "We have a new Secretary-General," the US ambassador, Robert Hunter, said. "We are delighted by the selection of Mr Solana."

"The 16 support Solana," said Carlos Miranda, Spain's ambassador to Nato, after an informal meeting of the alliance's ambassadors. "This is a very good and important day for Spain."

The main barrier to Solana's appointment was removed on Thursday, when officials in Washington indicated the United States would throw its weight behind him, even though Spain

is not fully integrated into Nato's military command structure. Many European allies had already backed him.

Mr Hunter said: "Minister Solana has great potential to become an outstanding Secretary-General at a critical time."

Despite not being an official candidate, Mr Solana emerged as the front-runner for the job after the US effectively vetoed the former Dutch prime minister, Ruud Lubbers. Simultaneously, France and Greece did the same for the former Danish foreign minister, Uffe Ellemann-Jensen.

British officials dismissed as "totally without foundation" reports in the Spanish and British media that Michael Portillo, the Secretary of State for Defence, had opposed Mr Solana because he campaigned against Spanish membership of Nato in the early 1980s.

However, 35 US Congressmen made public their opposition to Mr Solana this week when they told the Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, in a letter, that it would be "totally inappropriate" to appoint him since Spain is not fully integrated into Nato's military command.

They said Mr Solana also was unacceptable critical of the US trade embargo on Cuba. State Department sources said Mr Christopher regarded him as a close friend who was deeply committed to strengthening US-European relations. Mr Christopher meets Mr Solana in Madrid today.

Mr Christopher arrives in Madrid before President Bill Clinton, who will sign a "transatlantic agenda" document with Jacques Santer, the President of the European Commission, and the Spanish Prime Minister, Felipe Gonz

lez, tomorrow. The "agenda" includes co-operation beyond traditional trade and security matters to include operations against terrorism and drug trafficking.

Mr Solana's departure would remove from the Spanish scene Mr Gonzalez's most likely successor as leader of an embattled Socialist Party that faces general elections in March. Mr Solana, has been close to Mr Gonzalez since the 1970s, and is the only minister remaining from the original cabinet formed in 1982 after the Socialists won a landslide election.

Although he had been a vocal opponent of Nato in the Seventies, as the government's spokesman he backed the 1986 referendum campaign in favour of Spain's continuing membership of the alliance.

Since the beginning of the war in the Balkans, he has advocated a tougher European line in the Balkans. Spain has become identified with the drive for greater EU defence integration.

Under Mr Solana's leadership, Nato will have to take crucial decisions concerning Bosnia, the question of mem



Javier Solana: Gained US support at the last minute

bership for Central and Eastern European nations, and the forging of new links with the Western European Union, the EU's punitive defence organisation. He will also be at the centre of efforts to create a European pillar for Nato, while not undermining the Atlantic link.

Papandreou's heirs wait on dying words

ANDREW GUMBEL
Athens

As Andreas Papandreou lies hooked up to lung and kidney support systems in an Athens hospital and the undeclared battle for his succession rages, one thought is haunting his would-be political heirs.

What if he ruins all the back-room negotiations and, in his dying breath, names his own successor as Prime Minister and leader of his socialist movement, Pasok? Even worse, what if the name he comes up with pleases nobody but himself and the man - or woman - that he designates?

One nightmare scenario, though admittedly an unlikely one, is that he will plump for Mimi, his glamorous but broadly disliked young wife who has been jealously guarded over his private office for the past two years and who has been watching over him day and night since he entered hospital 12 days ago. One senior Pasok member was clear: "You never know the whims of

a dying man. But if he does that, we'll all pretend not to hear."

Mr Papandreou would not have to go so far, though, to sow the seeds of discord in party ranks. A name like Akis Tsochatzopoulos, his loyal Interior Minister and official stand-in as prime minister, would also go down badly with many militants, who see him as a bully-boy, and would risk exacerbating the rifts that already exist between pro- and anti-Papandreou camps within Pasok.

Officially, government members insist Mr Papandreou is still in charge, even though he can communicate only through facial gestures and handwriting. "Last time I saw him communicating, three days ago, he wrote the words: 'I will survive'," Telemachos Cytiris, the government spokesman, said.

However, the latest thinking is that the roles of prime minister and party leader might be divided, with either Gerassimos Arsenis, the Defence Minister, or Costas Simitis, a leading Pasok dissident, taking the pre

iership, and Mr Tsochatzopoulos controlling the party. Mr Arsenis and Mr Simitis are economic specialists with a broadly pro-European outlook.

Time may be running out, since Mr Papandreou's doctors have been unable to take him off the artificial respirator that sustained him for most of last week and has done so again since Tuesday. Mr Papandreou also underwent a fourth course of kidney dialysis yesterday.

There is now talk of transferring the Prime Minister on to a more powerful heart-lung machine, or even of performing a tracheotomy to enable him to breathe independently through an opening in his throat. Neither prospect is reassuring for a frail 76-year-old with a history of serious heart problems.

Meanwhile, on the streets of Athens, the mood is turning to one of discomfort at Mr Papandreou's agony. "Why do they torture him like this? They should turn the machines off and let him die with dignity," one shopkeeper said.

Dirty-war inquiry blocked

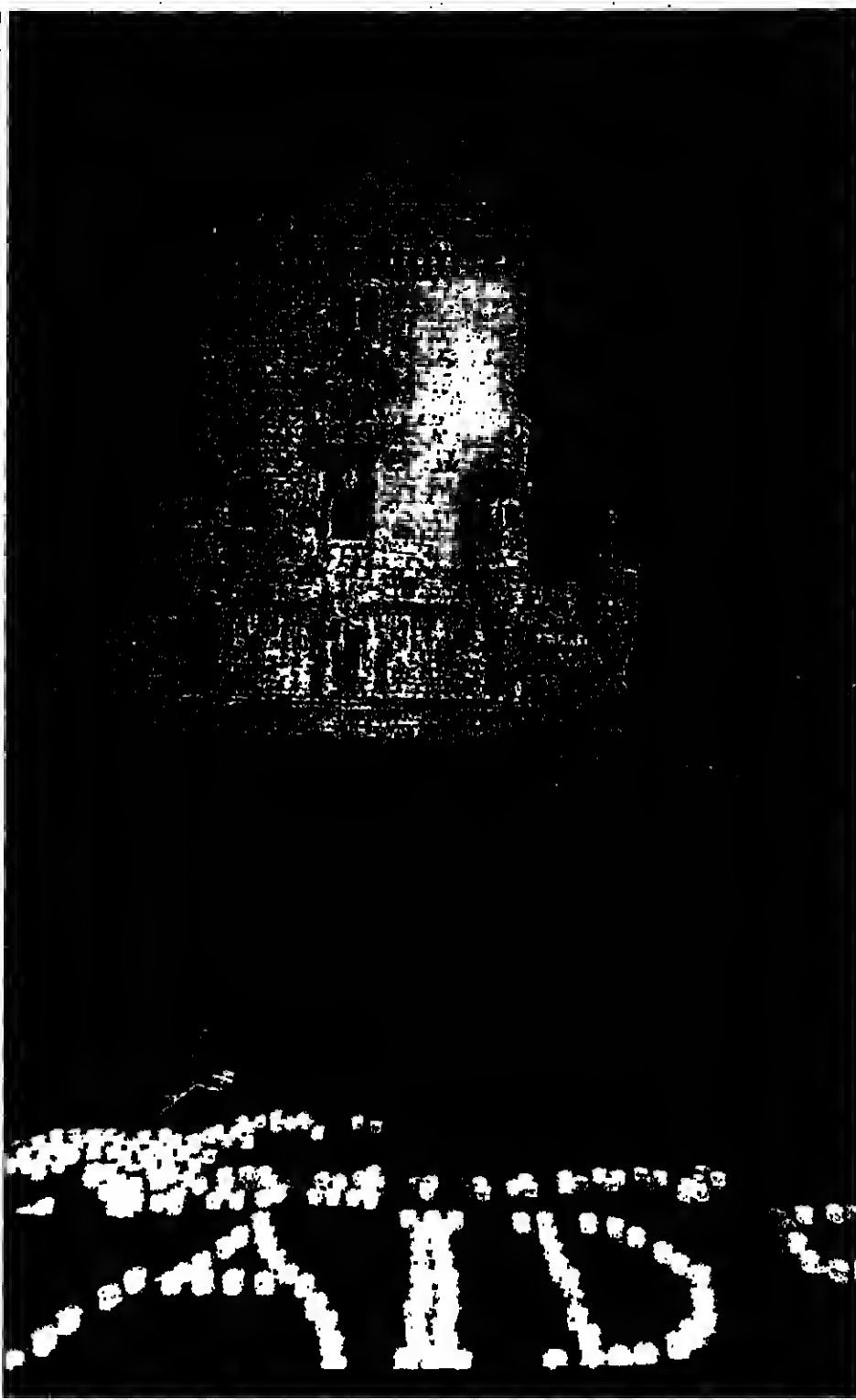
Madrid — Spain's ruling Socialist Party, which has resisted opposition efforts to investigate its role in a dirty war against Basques in the 1980s, yesterday succeeded in killing a Senate inquiry that sought to question two former ministers, writes Elizabeth Nash.

The inquiry was set up three weeks ago to investigate whether the Socialist government had been responsible for the so-called Anti-terrorist Liberation Groups (GAL) — death squads. But the Socialists were able to muster the votes of the Catalan and Basque nationalists to reject plans to call Mr Gonzalez in connection with covert

operations during the early years of his premiership. The court is due to question Mr Barriochove after parliament voted last week to lift his immunity as an MP. Mr Barriochove will be called on suspicion of kidnapping, misuse of public funds and association with an armed band.

There has been much talk in the Socialist camp recently about the undesirability of having "parallel" inquiries. A number of judges warned that the parliamentary inquiry could clash with the judicial one, thus casting a shadow over the credibility of the Senate commission.

There has been much talk in the Socialist camp recently about the undesirability of having "parallel" inquiries. A number of judges warned that the parliamentary inquiry could clash with the judicial one, thus casting a shadow over the credibility of the Senate commission.



Dying light: 2,700 candles in front of the Belem tower, in Lisbon, commemorate, on World Aids Day yesterday, those in Portugal who have died of the disease

Bolivia starts digging for Che's remains

PHIL DAVISON
Latin America Correspondent

For 28 years and 50 days, Bolivian domestic aircraft may have been landing on Che Guevara's remains at the dusty Vallegrande airstrip more than 400 miles south of the capital, La Paz.

Yesterday, officials began digging up part of the dirt runway for what is left of the Argentine-born revolutionary who became a worldwide symbol of social change after joining Fidel Castro in the Cuban revolution.

The Bolivians did not expect to find much. Che's hands were cut off after he was killed in 1967 and Bolivian army officers tried to burn his body before tossing him into a grave with other Marxist guerrillas. His thick black beard and wavy hair may help with identification.

Almost three decades later, President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada decided Ernesto "Che" (the Argentine version of "Buddy") Guevara's remains should be returned to his family for a Catholic burial.

Retired General Mario Vargas, 62, who as a 34-year-old army captain witnessed the secret burial at 11pm on 11 October 1967, led investigators from a presidential commission to the site. At first, he could not recall the spot but apparently had his memory jogged by two local people who had watched the night-time burial.

Although Bolivian army officers had put Che's body on public display in a Vallegrande hospital laundry room, and published famous photographs to prove to the world he was dead, they later panicked as the dead guerrilla's Christ-like im

age as a corpse only increased his mystique. They buried him in a secret communal grave and remained silent until General Vargas led the presidential investigators to the site.

Trained as a doctor in Argentina, Guevara joined Fidel Castro's revolutionary forces in Mexico before landing in Cuba and helping to overthrow the dictator, Fulgencio Batista, in 1959. As Mr Castro's right-hand man, he served in the government before returning to Argentina to fight for Marxist revolution in 1964. In early 1967, he tried to "export the revolution" to Bolivia but was captured on 8 October that year, a useless, rusted carbine in his hands. He was shot the following day, his last words: "Go ahead and shoot. You are a coward but you are shooting a man."

Guevara has relatives in both Argentina and Cuba. His eldest daughter, Hilda, died of cancer at the age of 39 in Havana in August, leaving behind Che's grandson, Canek Guevara, a 21-year-old rock guitarist.

Cuba and left-wing politicians in Argentina have requested his remains. His hands, at first sent to Argentina for fingerprint checks, ended up in Cuba, where Mr Castro preserved and retained them in a secret vault.

Mr Castro has encouraged Guevara's martyr image even more than his own — Che's face looks down from buildings around Cuba and from ubiquitous T-shirts.

Way down in Vallegrande, the tourism potential is not lost on Mayor Hoover Cabrera. He wants Che's remains untouched and a Che museum at the "historic site".

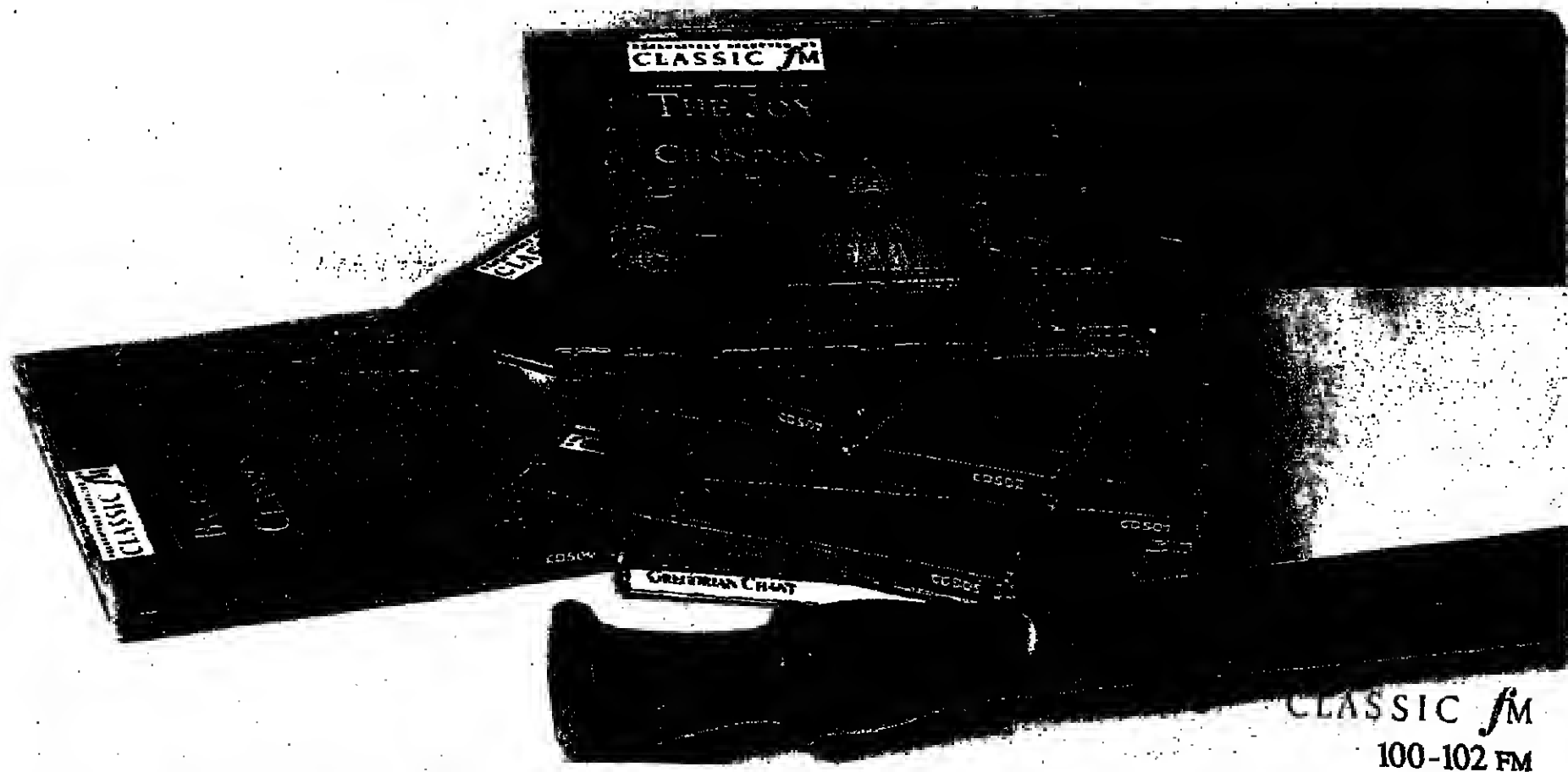
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Saudi king's illness stirs succession fears

MICHAEL SHERIDAN
Diplomatic Editor

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, who is 73, was being treated in hospital yesterday for an undisclosed medical condition, prompting speculation on the international oil markets about a succession crisis.

The Saudi monarch was taken to the King Faisal specialist hospital in Riyadh in on Thursday morning. He had just returned to the capital after several days in the desert.

"We are pleased to announce that all the check-ups conducted this morning on the custodian of the two Holy Shrines are reassuring and, thank God, he is enjoying health and fitness," a statement from the royal court said late on Thursday.

King Fahd is overweight, suffers from diabetes and uses a stick for walking because of a painful knee. He underwent gall bladder surgery last year.

In a departure from tradition, the monarch's admission to hospital was publicised on the front pages of Saudi newspapers, broadcast on state television and was carried by the official news agency. But his ailment was not revealed.

The uncertainties about Saudi Arabia beyond King Fahd stem more from the inner poli-

tics of the royal family than an external threat. The succession to the throne is brokered between the survivors among the 43 sons born by several wives to King Abdul Aziz, the founder of the kingdom, who lived from 1876 to 1953.

King Fahd's departure from the scene could cause uncertainty, because his brother and heir apparent, Crown Prince Abdullah, may face opposition among the 6,000 princes of the ruling dynasty.

In practice, modern court politics have been dominated by Fahd and his six full brothers born to Abdul Aziz's favourite wife, Hassa bint Ahmad Sudairi. The "Sudairi Seven" include the Defence Minister, Prince Sultan, the Interior Minister, Prince Nayef, and the governor of Riyadh, Prince Salman.

Some analysts believe the remaining Sudairi brothers would resist the succession of Crown Prince Abdullah, who is outside their ranks. Others believe the royal family could skip a generation and hand the throne to a figure such as the Western-educated Foreign Minister, Prince Saud, son of the assassinated King Faisal.

"I think Fahd's death means instability for the country because his designated successor, Abdullah, is also old and

unwell himself," said Said Aburish, author of a recent critical book about the kingdom.

King Fahd was shortly due to meet King Hussein of Jordan for the first time in five years, marking an important act of reconciliation after Jordan's estrangement from Saudi Arabia during the 1990-91 Gulf war. He was also expected to travel to Muscat, the capital of Oman, for

taken refuge in London, from where they campaign against his rule, denouncing it as corrupt.

Despite the abuse from the exiles, there is little sign of opposition in Saudi Arabia itself. The secret police and special security forces, armed and trained by the United States, keep hold of internal affairs. Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarchy whose constitution is the Koran, permitting neither freedom of assembly nor religious dissent.

But King Fahd has overseen a measure of liberalisation, channelling the views of prominent families and merchant interests through an appointed consultative assembly. His chosen title, "Custodian of the two Holy Shrines", or "Servant of the two Holy Places", was selected to emphasise the royal family's rule over Mecca and Medina, an important source of prestige in the Muslim world.

Saudi Arabia is the world's largest petroleum exporter, holding about a quarter of global oil reserves, and is a close ally of the US and Britain. The royal family is criticised by religious purists and has taken steps to deal with an economic crisis caused by declining oil revenues. A recent car bomb in Riyadh, which killed five Americans, underlined the potential for instability in the region.



King Fahd: Doubts centre on politics of royal family

a meeting of the Saudi-dominated Gulf Co-Operation Council next Monday.

Although in poor health, he appeared vigorous at a late night meeting three weeks ago with the Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind. King Fahd complained about the activities of Saudi dissidents who have



Volcanic alert: Cyclists in Leon, north-west of the Nicaraguan capital, Managua, covering their mouths to avoid inhaling volcanic ash. The town is on red alert following the eruption of Cerro Negro. The authorities have advised everyone living nearby to take special precautions. Photograph: Brennan Linsley/AP

SA braced for 'truth' about its racist past

ROBERT BLOCK
Johannesburg

One-and-a-half years after the death of apartheid, South Africa is ready to examine its past. President Nelson Mandela this week named the 17 members of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, whose job over the next 18 months will be to root out the crimes of the apartheid years. Work on the grim task will begin in the next few weeks.

Although the body is headed by the respected Nobel Prize-winner, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and although the former ruling National Party has accepted the appointment of the commission, there may be trouble ahead.

There are already rumblings which indicate that Archbishop

nored. South Africa is hoping its experiment will somehow turn out differently.

For President Mandela and the country's black majority, the commission's work is essential for the future. For them there can be no reconciliation unless those responsible for apartheid-era crimes face up to their guilt. But for many conservative white South Africans, the past would be better forgotten and forgiven without the theatrics.

Whites, particularly Afrikaners, fear the commission will be little more than a one-sided tribunal seeking to punish their former leaders and generals. Many, like former president PW Botha, have said they will refuse to co-operate. They say Mr Mandela's commitment to reconciliation has been suspect since the arrest of General Magnus Malan and 10 senior officers for 13 apartheid-era murders.

The general and his co-defendants appeared in a Durban court yesterday to hear the charges detailed and will go on trial in March.

General Malan has become the main focal point for opposition to the Truth Commission. They say the general is proof that the President and his African National Congress (ANC) want to humiliate and punish only former government personnel while glossing over the excesses of their own people.

In a taste of the kind of political debate to come, Mr Mandela started a nasty round of mudslinging with his deputy, FW de Klerk, over the Malan case and the question of indemnity for former government officials.

The President has steadfastly refused appeals by Mr De Klerk to grant the "Malan 11" indemnity. Last weekend, Mr Mandela called Mr De Klerk "a joke" for suggesting that if the trial were to proceed, then "even-handedness" demanded that senior ANC officials who received indemnity from the last white-minority government should be prosecuted for their crimes.

The bitterness of the exchange led commentators to conclude that the government of national unity and the Mandela-De Klerk political marriage were on the rocks. Sensing trouble, Mr Mandela moved this week to defuse the row. He praised Mr De Klerk and told the media not to exaggerate differences between them.

"Our relationship is determined by our friendship, our respect for each other and added to that is the question of necessity. He needs me, I need him... like it or not that is the reality," the President said.

While there is little doubt that Mr Mandela needs Mr De Klerk to assuage white fears over black rule and provide financial stability in the white-dominated economy, there is a widespread belief that General Malan's trial and the Truth Commission's investigations could lead to revelations which would force Mr De Klerk to resign.



FW de Klerk bitter dispute with President Mandela

Tutu's panel is going to have a difficult time, and that its findings could shatter the pact under which whites and blacks have agreed to live side-by-side. The commission's panel is about more than exposing the abuses of white minority rule and the struggle to overthrow it. Its chief aim is to foster a national reckoning by uncovering the truth about the violence of the past, and in doing so, aid the healing of South Africa's psyche. It has the power to grant amnesty to those who offer "full disclosure" of past wrongdoings, or to recommend the prosecution of those who don't. "I hope that the work of the commission is going to help to pour balm on wounds which we will open to cleanse so that they don't fester... so that we can then say let those bygones be bygones and let us now concentrate on... the future," Archbishop Tutu said.

The panel is similar to other "truth" commissions set up in Eastern Europe and Latin America to explore the crimes of past governments. Many of those have been criticised either for whitewashing history in the name of political expediency or for using their findings to discredit political opposition. Often, in the rush to forge a *modus vivendi* between the oppressor and the oppressed, the victims of violence have been ig-



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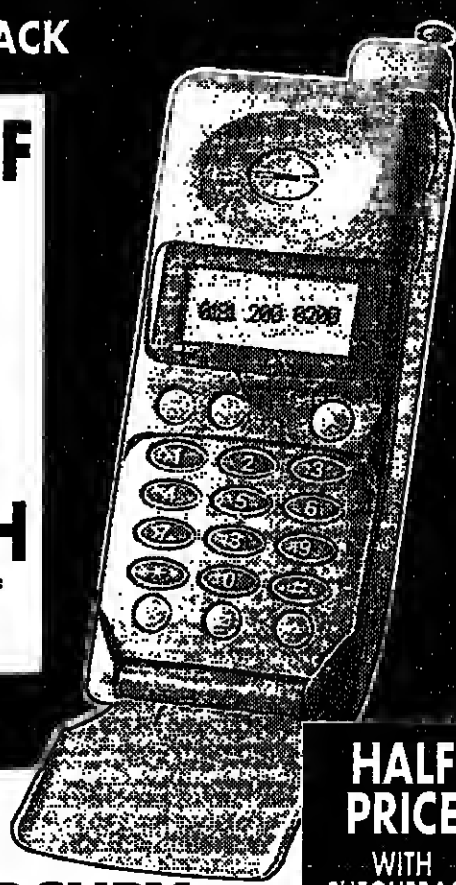
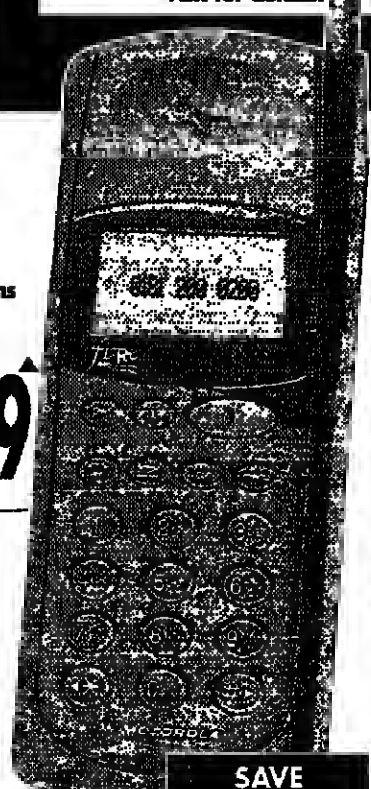
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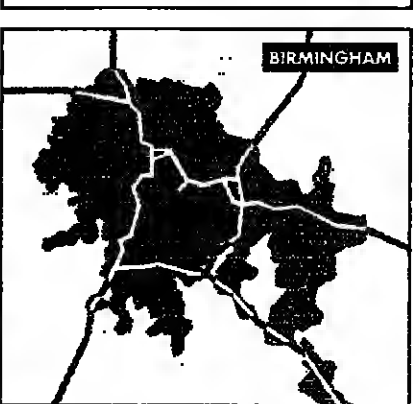
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international

China glowers as Taiwan goes to the polls

STEPHEN VINES
Hong Kong

China's leaders must be facing increasing frustration in their attempts to influence today's legislative elections in Taiwan, the immensely wealthy offshore island which they regard as a renegade province.

First, they have no experience of democratic elections. Secondly, they are supposed to be indifferent to their outcome in Taiwan. Thirdly, they desperately want the Taiwanese voters to give the thumbs down to President Lee Teng-hui and others who are seen as encouraging the further separation of Taiwan from the Chinese mainland.

This probably explains why Shen Guofang, China's foreign ministry spokesman, was so evasive when questioned about whether the Chinese government was trying to influence the election by holding a series of threatening military exercises off Taiwan's coast.

The military action is backed up by Cultural Revolution-style rhetoric. On Tuesday the Peking-controlled *Wen Wei Po* newspaper in Hong Kong wrote in glowing terms of how, "for the sake of unification of the motherland, the Fujian (the province facing Taiwan) people will once again not grudge having to make sacrifices".

It may be no more than sore-rattling. But the Hong Kong and Taiwan press are full stories of how the Chinese gov-

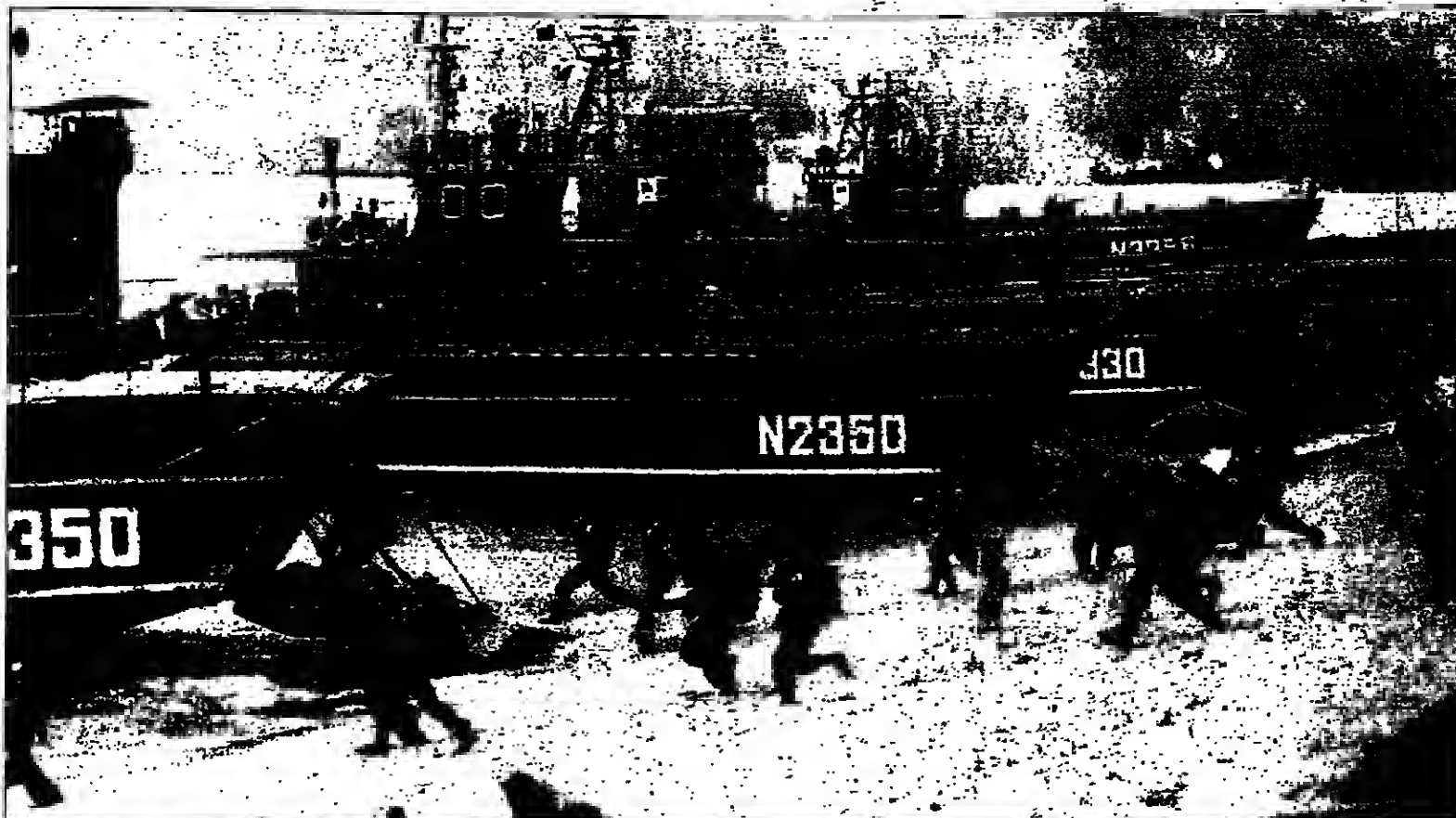
ernment has changed the criteria for dealing with Taiwan by military means. A widely leaked Chinese government document, allegedly from a Taiwan policy committee headed by President Jiang Zemin, states that the previous criteria for deciding on the need for an invasion should Taiwan declare independence is too narrow.

According to the document it is necessary to consider military means to counter "covert independence", which means President Lee's policy of perpetuating the division of the motherland, and deliberate procrastination in reunification talks. In these circumstances China would be justified in launching a small-scale military invasion to combat a small scale-independence movement.

The effect of all this military posturing in Taiwan has oscillated from extreme concern to indifference. The local stock market is more than ever like a roller-coaster as mood-swings are reflected in the price of shares.

Yesterday, President Lee hit back at China's threats, insisting: "The ballot is stronger than the bullet." He told a group of visiting US former senators and administration officials: "The military exercises... are negative, and the actions of Communist China are unwise."

A government official dealing with China relations said that he was aware of growing



Show of strength: Chinese ground, air and naval forces mounting a joint exercise this week in Fujian province, which faces Taiwan

pressure from the Chinese military for greater leeway in taking action against Taiwan, and was taking it seriously.

Lee Kuo-hsing, a politics professor at the National

Chengchi University, said that although there was "an increased sense of risk", he believed that there were "weak reasons for military action" and he reckoned that China would

worry about the international reaction.

China's ham-fisted election strategy is to weaken both the outright pro-independence forces in Taiwan and the ma-

jority faction in the ruling Kuomintang Party, which it sees as backing President Lee's pro-independence line. China seems to be unaware that the Kuomintang is quite capable of

shooting itself in the foot without its assistance. Indeed, the threats from Peking may well have the effect of rallying support for a party which is deeply divided and surrounded by the

pusant aroma of corruption. The Kuomintang is now more openly split than at any time since Chiang Kai-shek brought his defeated forces to Taiwan in 1949.

Two leading members, the former prime minister, Hsu Pei-sun, and Lin Yang-kang, are declared runners in the March presidential election, the first in Taiwan's history.

Other senior Kuomintang officials have also entered the race against President Lee, including an 82-year-old former senior adviser to the President, Henry Kuo.

Meanwhile, the breakaway New Party, with an outspoken programme of reunification with the mainland, is making some headway among younger middle-class Kuomintang supporters and old-guard military stalwarts.

The splits in the ruling party will probably do little to prevent President Lee from being re-elected but they pose serious problems for the Kuomintang in today's poll. The pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party is rubbing its hands as the ruling party falls apart, and stands to make gains from splits in the conservative vote.

It is even possible that the Kuomintang will lose its overall majority in the legislature.

This would move Taiwan into uncharted waters, as the legislative and executive wings of government have never before been controlled by different parties.

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Ex-president could face death penalty

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
Tokyo

Roh Tae Woo, the disgraced former president of South Korea, has chosen an intriguing book for his bedtime reading. Every night, before the lights go out in the Seoul Detention House, where he is being held pending imminent bribery charges, Mr Roh reads a few pages of the memoirs of Margaret Thatcher.

Broadly, there are parallels between the two former leaders: both presided over periods of boom in their country's economies, only to be stabbed in the back, as they saw it, by younger men whose careers they had nurtured. But if Mr Roh is looking for consolation, he will find little in *The Downing Street Years*.

While Baroness Thatcher promoted free-market monetarism and the small businessman, Mr Roh enriched Korea's giant corporations with a vigorous programme of state intervention and protectionism. While she was ousted by her own party, Mr Roh handed his presidency to a trusted successor in 1993. And if Lady Thatcher had the consolation of a peerage and a bag of lucrative directorships, Mr Roh has no such perks to look forward to.

After owning up in October to a huge personal slush-fund worth \$650m (\$420m), he stands a good chance of receiving a life sentence for corruption. Now, as the scandal widens, he faces an even grimmer possibility: death by hanging, on charges of treason and mass murder.

Amid mounting public hysteria, the government of President Kim Young Sam furnished details this week of a new law which will allow Mr Roh and his predecessor, Chun Doo Hwan, to be prosecuted for the 1979 coup which brought them to power. Prosecutors have summoned Mr Chun for questioning today.

The coup, and the infamous Kwangju massacre, in which

hundreds of pro-democracy demonstrators were killed by paratroopers, occurred just outside the 15-year statute of limitations. Officials told journalists in Seoul that the constitution will be amended to overcome this obstacle.

A special law will then be drafted allowing for the prosecution of the coup leaders and their eventual execution.

Constitutional amendments must be approved by a national referendum but in the current atmosphere of hatred against Mr Roh there is little doubt that it would gain overwhelming public approval.

All week there have been daily demonstrations, some of them violent, calling for the prosecution of the two men. In Kwangju itself, 800 students fought riot police on Wednesday, and demanded an independent inquiry into both the slush-fund scandal and the massacre. Opposition parties accuse President Kim of hypocrisy in his pursuit of Mr Roh, who founded the ruling Democratic Liberal Party. "There is no change in the nature of Kim, who took power by joining hands with the slaughterers, Kwangju students shouted.

The crisis has provoked a more than usually tense atmosphere on the border with Communist North Korea. Yesterday, Mr Kim urged extra vigilance, saying that there had been worrying signs of North Korean activity. "They are also building up fighter planes and bombers near the demilitarised zone [between the two countries]," a spokesman quoted Mr Kim as saying. "We must firmly cope with any aggressive attempts by the North Koreans," he said. "Our political and social atmosphere could be read as a sign of a weakened security posture on our part."

Twenty-nine political activists campaigning for unity between the two countries have been arrested under the draconian national security law.

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Something wrong in cider country

Paddy Ashdown's concern about racist attacks in Yeovil highlighted a problem seething beneath the surface of Middle England. Peter Popham visits a West Country battleground



The victims: Luthfur Rahman and Akbar Hussein fended off a siege at the Viceroy

Luthfur Rahman wanted out. The son of Bengali parents, 23 years old, born and raised in London's East End, he wanted to break free of the criminality of his surroundings in Upton Park to have a crack at running his own business, and to make a new life. After leaving school, he and two friends worked hard and saved money. When they had enough, they cast around for a part of the country where Indian restaurants were in short supply. They hit upon Yeovil (pop. 40,000) in the southern part of a county, Somerset, where ethnic groups are practically non-existent, amounting to half of one per cent - almost the lowest rate in the country. Last year, Luthfur and his friends took the plunge. They bought a property, moved down and on 13 October, opened The Viceroy Tandoori.

It's a cosy place - impressionist prints in gold frames are set in small baize-lined alcoves, and pleated beige-coloured cotton covers the walls and ceiling. It's like eating dinner inside a bar box. The friends' move seemed a great idea. But the Viceroy's honeymoon was brief. Within weeks, a crowd of toughs had begun to prey on the place, going round after the pubs closed, ordering food then throwing it around, smashing toilets, spitting racial abuse. Yeovil was beginning to make Upton Park look friendly.

Six weeks after the opening, the same people came back and smashed the windows. This was to happen half a dozen more times. In between, the drunken assaults continued and staff were kicked, punched and threatened with murder if they gave evidence in court. The restaurant was hit on eggs were thrown, graffiti was sprayed on the outside walls saying "Pakis go home, Pakis smell".

On 8 October this year, the usual people turned up with a house-for-sale sign with which they tried to break the windows once again. They attacked staff in the kitchen, and within minutes, 10 friends arrived as reinforcements. Luthfur, a painfully slight, boyish figure, realised his restaurant was under siege. He and his colleagues barricaded themselves inside. The violence continued for half an hour, at which point the mob outside had grown to about 50. Five police cars arrived, a number of arrests were made and charges were brought. The next day, a kebab restaurant a few doors up the road was fire-bombed.

These are shocking events to occur in a small, uneventful West Country market town in 1995. But you would probably not be reading about them if something much more attention-grabbing had not happened last week - Paddy Ashdown, the town's MP, alerted to its racist violence, went for a late-night walk about and ended up fighting off a knife-wielding man. With Ashdown's commando reflexes and his alleged assailant's Manson-like stare splashed over newspapers, Yeovil finds itself squirming under most unwelcome attention.

Surrounded though it is by pretty countryside and chocolate-box villages, Yeovil is decidedly short on charm. Home to Westland Helicopters and much light industry, it is a casebook study of how, post-World War II, to ruin a perfectly

fine little place. Ring road, pedestrian precinct, ugly new shops, out-of-town stores - Yeovil has the lot. And unlike, say, Taunton or Dorchester, it has little save its rusticity to compensate. Middle Street, the town's main shopping street, at the bottom of which the Viceroy and the town's nine other ethnic restaurants are grouped, is festooned with To Let signs.

But lack of charm does not account for the rampant terror visited weekly on the Viceroy and its near-neighbours. Racial incidents in a town without racial minorities sound ridiculous, unthinkable. But according to Rev Mark Ellis, vicar of St Michael's parish church, the unthinkable is exactly what is happening. "People assume racial harassment is a problem only of inner-city areas where there are ghettos and clearly-defined racial neighbourhoods," he says. "But racism is endemic throughout the country. Yeovil is a town with so much going for it - good community, good facilities, good educational opportunities, high employment, no bad housing, yet we still have a few people who bully ethnic minorities. And in a small community, it is more difficult for these families to protect themselves because they are so obviously on their own."

"Most people in the community don't see the problem. They don't know it is going on."

Conversations on the streets of the town confirm Mr Ellis's view that apathy is widespread. "It's all been blown up in the press since Paddy was attacked," a housewife said. "There are a few bad apples

but all this stuff in the media will make it worse." A young tattooed man out shopping with his wife and baby echoed this view: "There are some ignorant bastards in the town, and most of them hang around at the bottom of Middle Street. It's not a race problem. We haven't got a race problem here."

Mr Ellis, Paddy Ashdown and other community leaders have now launched what they call a Partnership Against Racial Harassment (Parh) to combat the problem. "Since we formed Parh," Mr Ellis says, "we have had a tremendous amount of support and messages of goodwill. People are beginning to wake up to the fact that this is going on. It is our problem, a community problem, and we have to solve it. We mustn't let individuals think they are on their own."

It is arguable that one reason for Yeovil's problem is its extreme whiteness. Anthea Fisher, a worker with the Somerset Racial Equality Network, says Somerset has not had a history of ethnic minorities coming into the county. Those who do arrive "are being treated in a very

prejudiced way through lack of knowledge".

"There is an element that has been causing harassment for some time and the people subjected to it have been too scared to come forward," she says. "They lack confidence, because they don't think anybody would listen."

"The incidents that have come to light have been very bad. There is constant verbal abuse, which must be very wearing. Yeovil isn't a bad place, but a group of individuals who are not representative of the town are causing great distress to people who are trying to get on and run a business. A lot of people in the town feel very upset about this. The partnership will be a positive step in drawing together people who want to see the situation change."

Several of the victims of violence are bitter about what they regard as slowness and ineffectuality in dealing with the problem. Denying the charge, Supt Ted Allen says that his officers are experienced in dealing with racist incidents, which have been rising in recent months, and which are drink-related. "This is not organised racism, but pure yobism," he says. "The restaurants and take-aways have suffered some quite horrendous situations. Because of that, we have been running special operations at weekends to put more uniforms on the streets and we have been looking at other ways of overcoming the problems. We want to try to prevent this happening and catch those responsible."

But Paddy Ashdown is quietly critical of some police attitudes. "We had a meeting of community

leaders to discuss incidents of racial harassment, and a representative of the police suggested that when there was trouble at one restaurant, staff from the other ethnic restaurants should club together with them in self-defence. I said absolutely not - it's our problem as a community. It's our job to protect them, not their job to protect themselves."

It is not, Ashdown insists, a problem peculiar to Yeovil. "Late-night vandalism has unfortunately become the norm in town centres across the country. But I am concerned because it's happening here in an extreme fashion. My clear view, backed by all that I've learned, is that this is not political in the sense that the BNP is behind it. And I don't want it to come to that. It's an extension of the vandalism. Those who have had a skintful of beer or cider think that in addition to breaking plate-glass windows, it would be a useful extension to do a bit of 'Paki-bashing', as well."

"It's part of the brutalisation of our society. People turn against the vulnerable. Afterward, they may justify it as hatred of blacks, but that's all it is. The group responsible are a small number of racists, perhaps 10 to 12 in their mid-30s; not young, not unemployed. I know their names, though I'm not going to tell you. I'm determined to put a stop to it, so Yeovil can be ahead of the rest of the country, not behind it."

Ashdown's custom of throwing himself into the heart of the fray, whether the war zone is Bosnia or Middle Street, may have given Yeovil a prominence it doesn't

deserve. This year, thugs in Taunton have put three young Bangladeshis in hospital; in Frome, a Pakistani family has been forced to abandon their business. There have been a total of 19 serious racist incidents around the county so far this year.

But Ashdown's unusually direct approach to his responsibilities means some help may be at hand for Yeovil's tiny community of ethnic restaurants. As he was lucky to discover, plain-clothes police are operating in the town centre late at night. Ashdown is now pushing for installation of closed-circuit television in Middle Street. There is talk of installing a radio network linked to the police station, so help can be summoned without delay.

These measures are too late, however, for Luthfur Rahman, whose main hope now is to escape Yeovil unscathed. "This restaurant is the seed from which we hoped much would grow," he says, "but the seed has now been flattened at the first attempt. Now the restaurant is in the red, but, of course, with all the adverse publicity it's impossible to sell it. The time we've been here has been no better than a prison sentence."

Yeovil is caught in a strange dilemma - do nothing and the violence of a few criminals could force the ethnic restaurants to flee the town - a shameful conclusion. Protect them properly and it may burden itself with the paraphernalia of a far larger, grimmer sort of conurbation. Closed-circuit television in the centre of Yeovil will be the final blow that the late-20th century has to inflict on this formerly innocent town.

There are some ignorant bastards in the town, but we haven't got a race problem here'

Jo Brand's week



Skimming the obituaries during the week, as I often do due to being such a miserable old trout on the quiet, I was saddened to read of the death of Stuart Henry, with whom I spent many nights during my teenage years. As a Radio Luxembourg DJ, he joined me under the covers on many occasions at very low volume, so my mum would not hear when she popped her head round the door. He was there the night I plucked my eyebrows into one line of hair, achieving what I thought was the attractive Seventies' look of a surprised alien and the evening from my mum that they would never grow back. How right she was. Stuart Henry faded from the airwaves because he had multiple sclerosis, leading people to imagine, in the early stages of the illness, that he was either drunk, or in that nauseating Radio 1 speak, smoking "funny tacco". The reason that people didn't know he was ill was because he didn't tell them. Who can blame him? People with degenerative illnesses are about as welcome in this society as I am at Champneys.



The Pope: supporter of feminism?

I had always thought the Pope an unlikely ally in the fight against paternalistic values, especially as for many he is the ultimate "Papa". So I was surprised to see him comment this week that, despite feminism, too many women are still victims of contempt and injustice. Maybe he's just got round to reading *The Female Eunuch*, or perhaps he's been noddled by a radical nun. Whatever, perhaps it's time for women to capitalise on this new-found liberalism from the Vatican and get the Pope on a few marches. That's if we're not too busy being pregnant all the time.

Shape selling new technology boom and bust at an alarming rate these days, in the face of our ever-changing demand for more

sophisticated gadgets. I wonder whether the people who work in such places are struggling to keep up with the intellectual demands of all this change, because they all seem to be morons who have no idea what they are talking about - nor care. I have become frustrated to the point of near violence with the lads who work in mobile phone shops. They're quite happy to sell you a load of cack without batting an eyelid - if you can get them to serve you, at the risk of interrupting their fascinating conversation. (You may be thinking that any twain who owns a mobile phone deserves this sort of treatment, but it's dead handy to have when I'm on my own in the car and also for phoning ahead to the Chinese takeaway for a large portion of number 54.)

A friend who recently bought a computer was given the wrong accessories, the wrong advice, the wrong everything. I'm surprised he actually got the computer and not a large turp. It is a cliché that computer nerds and technophiles have no social graces, but the apparent lack of interest in, or knowledge of, their subject places these shop workers high on the list of those most likely to be exterminated in my New Year's Honours List. I don't know why the baddies in the new Bond film are bothering to try and destroy everything

Incidentally, it is amusing to watch the actors in the confused, anachronistic pile of pap that is the new James Bond film talking seriously about their roles. So the baddie can crush people to death with her thighs? Given her name is Xenia Onatopp, they should have me. I could have just sat on them.



Move over Xenia and let me have a go

The consolation I had when my fave team Crystal Palace went down into the First Division was that I would be able to watch them on terrestrial telly, being unable to bring myself to line Rupert Murdoch's wallet a bit more. I now discover that he has got his sweaty little mitts on the Enders League as well. Is it good for footie? Balls.

France is about to restrict the expansion of vast shopping centres that ring cities. Small shopkeepers are being driven out of business. We have a similar problem here. In London, there appear to be Ikea at the very corners of the city. I've never been to Ikea, but friends tell me it's hell at the weekend as desperate shoppers vie for parking and consuming. Why do we want to flock to worship at the altar of Scandinavian furniture en masse when we can't stand each other the rest of the time? I'd rather have less choice and a bit more breathing space.

Teenage mags hit the headlines this week as TV *Hus* was withdrawn from Sainsbury's, Tesco and Asda. What could have offended them so much? The double standards of teenage magazines that tell young women to respect and think for themselves and then force boys, fashion, boys, diets, boys, make-up and boys down their gullets? No. They're all up in arms about fellatio.

Why should that be any more shocking than letters from girls aged 13 asking whether they should have sex with their boyfriend?

Any offence in that game is much the same as any other, in my book.

The sexual act is splashed across every tabloid from here to kingdom come. Parents who are concerned about their child's sexual awakening seem to me to be far outweighed by the many that couldn't give a toss. These magazines are responding to what they see to be a demand. Who can blame them, given the childhood now into just a few years is what depresses me. This same debate will blow up again in 10 years' time. I expect, but next time it won't be a teenage mag, it will be the *Beano*.

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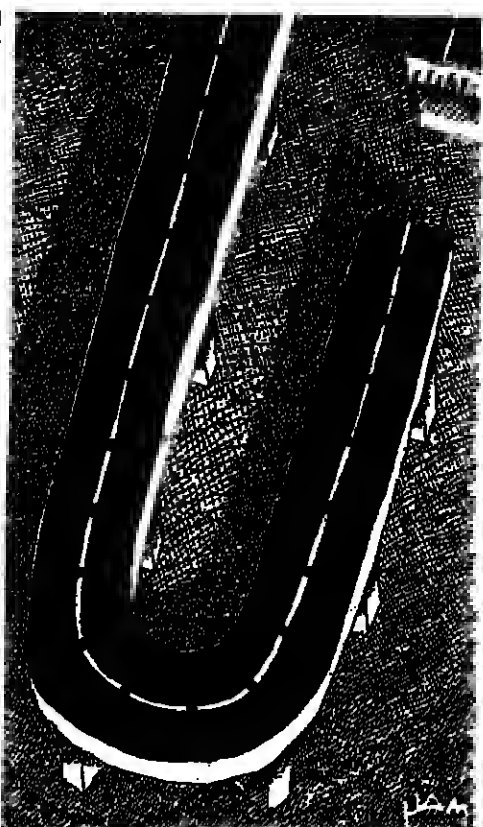
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The Government policy that was lost in transit

One of the great planks of Tory dogma was quietly, almost secretly buried last week when Kenneth Clarke and the Transport Secretary, Sir George Young, combined to ditch the Government's previously much-cherished road-building programme. The years of telling us that roads are essential for economic prosperity are now history. The war fought by the Dongas tribe at Twyford Down, the tree people of Bathurst as well as by the stout Tory ladies of Staines near the M25 has been won. The national road-building programme will now consist of a few dribs and drabs, the odd bypass or trunk road widening scheme.

It is a momentous event, yet it was deliberately hidden among all the other news of the Budget because it begs more questions than the Government at present is able to answer. Indeed, there was more than a touch of dishonesty about what happened on Budget day. The Chancellor, in his characteristic bluff way, spoke of an extra £500m for roads under the Private Finance Initiative. Even yesterday, when the BBC Today programme described the money as a "paltry extra £500m" for roads, the penny had still not dropped.

This is not extra money for roads - nor, as Sir George tried to depict it, just another way of bringing about the same level of roadbuilding. In fact, there has been a massive drop in the annual expenditure earmarked for national road schemes, from its peak of £2bn last year to £1.5bn, and we learnt in the Budget that it is to go on falling. But the more lasting effect, again revealed on Tuesday, is that under a review of



the programme 117 schemes, some 60 per cent of the total, have either been permanently abandoned or put on hold. As a result, barely a handful of schemes will be started between now and the general election.

The roads lobby was appalled at both the decision and the way in which it was disguised, calling it the "worst day for Britain's infrastructure since the Romans left". They are also sceptical of the Private Finance Initiative's ability to deliver any roads quickly.

This is the sad end of the whole vision behind the roads programme, which was first set out in a rather thin White Paper called *Roads to Prosperity* in 1989. The gist of the argument then was that Britain needed "a major expansion of the Government's programme for building and improving inter-urban roads" to "meet the forecast needs of traffic into the next century". These were heady times for the roadbuilding industry, as it seemed that the Government genuinely believed it could build itself out of the traffic congestion crisis.

The problem was that there was never any hope of doing so. Traffic was expected to rise by between 142 per cent and 834 per cent between 1988 and 2025, and there was never any chance of increasing the capacity of Britain's roads by that amount. Money was being pumped into a programme that at best stopped things getting worse quicker. Finally, the Treasury said no more.

Tuesday's events had been presaged in March, when Sir George's predecessor, Brian Mawhinney, abandoned plans to turn parts of the M25

into a 14-lane megahighway. Once it was accepted that even the busiest stretch of motorway in Britain could not be widened because of the uproar from the largely Tory local people, the policy of massive roadbuilding had nowhere to go. As we predicted at the time in March, all the motorway widening schemes have now been scrapped.

But why didn't Sir George proudly boast about his new policy, rather than slipping it through as part of the Budget? Because in representing such a massive U-turn it was simply too embarrassing, and to boot because he is offering nothing at its stead.

He made a few token comments about making "more efficient use of the roads we have", but this would cost a lot of money too. This is something they have discovered in Japan, where the Government has spent £120m creating a massive information system for Tokyo's roads. With a network of 13,000 sensors around the city to collect information on jams, and variable message screens on every street corner to relay the information, delays have been reduced by 8 per cent in the past 10 months. Soon drivers will be able to buy their own in-car screens to pick up the information themselves, and will be offered alternative routes with the aid of computerised maps.

Meanwhile, in Britain, we are waiting for the private sector to develop the infrastructure and pay for its installation, because the Government refuses to put in any seedcorn funding. Japan is already using technology to reduce congestion, while in Britain we are years away from even

starting pilot schemes. This will be a great missed opportunity, since Japanese equipment manufacturers will be in a position to flood our market in the same way they have done with cameras and Walkmans.

The destruction of the roadbuilding programme in the Budget signifies that transport policy has been taken over by the Treasury. If Sir George wants to retain his credibility, he needs to wrest back the initiative. Earlier this year, Dr Mawhinney launched a transport debate which seemed genuinely to be asking the right questions about transport policy.

When Sir George publishes the results of the debate, which he has said he will do early next year, he must do more than reiterate platitudes about congestion and actually suggest radical ways of tackling the crisis. He must actually begin to make difficult choices which will antagonise a lot of people, for example by restricting car parking in towns, reducing speed limits or turning over road space to cyclists.

Now that few new roads are to be built, it is only through such courageous measures that the inexorable clogging up of our roads can be halted. There is no shortage of examples from abroad where all sorts of well-tried schemes, ranging from measures to increase bus usage to building light rail systems, are being implemented. Some of these are cheap, others cost a lot of money. Sir George must now let the Treasury have its way by stopping roadbuilding, but in return he has to persuade them to cough up for alternative transport policies that will stop the steady drift towards gridlock.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Symbolic cuts to lone parents

From Professor Ruth Lister
Sir: Hamish McRae (29 November) refers to the Chancellor's "carefully neutral statement on single parents - that they should be treated in the same way as couples with children, not specially favoured". There is, though, nothing "neutral" about the decision to phase out the modest additional help provided to lone-parent families, both in work and out of work through one-parent benefit and the lone-parent premium, nor about the Budget of which it is a part.

The Chancellor justified this decision on the basis that "the cost and responsibilities of having children are the same for couples as they are for single people". Ten years ago, this Government published a Green Paper on social security reform in which it made the case for the lone-parent premium, which replaced a long-term rate paid after a year, on the grounds of the "greater needs" of and "extra pressures" faced by lone parents. Similarly, it proposed continuing one-parent benefit "as a contribution to the additional costs faced by lone parents in bringing up children alone".

I am not aware that the difficulties faced by lone parents compared with couples raising

children have eased over the past decade. If the Government has research which underpins this significant change in policy, it should publish it. In the absence of such research, one can only conclude that what has changed is the political saliency of lone parents as the Chancellor came under pressure from the Right of his party to do something to shore up the traditional two-parent family.

It is unlikely that they really believe that such measures could affect current family trends. Instead, they amount to a piece of punitive symbolism, but a piece of symbolism which will gradually push many lone parents and their children further into poverty. Ironically, the removal of the non-means-tested one-parent benefit could serve to undermine the more welcome proposals to make it easier for lone parents to move into full-time paid employment. However, even these proposals will have only limited effect so long as the Government refuses to invest in our inadequate child care facilities.

Yours sincerely
RUTH LISTER
Professor of Social Policy
Department of Social Sciences
Loughborough University
Loughborough, Leicestershire
30 November

What does Hirst's udderless cow mean?

From Ms Barbara Spring
Sir: The contemporary art sceptics will have all their doubts and hates confirmed by this year's Turner Prize choice ("Enfant Terrible" Hirst wins the prize, 29 November). I, too, but particularly because of a problem with the inherent nature of the work.

Anyone who has seen a cow must have a problem with Damien Hirst's cow. The poor divided creature accompanied by a calf could never have suckled any child, being to all appearances perfectly udderless: the full bag of rich and beautiful milk that gives life to calf and child, that makes a cow a cow, is simply not there.

Having given the work a name ("Mother and child divided: how does a calf preserved in poison have 'eternal life'?" Nick Turpin), the viewer presumes the artist intends something meaningful about the work. What does this udderless cow mean? Is there a hidden agenda here: is it a cynical joke? Is it an existential exercise? Or, after the calf had been paid for, did funds not run to a full milking cow so an immature heifer was bought instead?

Once one has seen the problem one suspects a fraud; if there is not integrity in a work considered to be so important, whatever are the values of both

artist and critic? I am having real trouble in suspending my disbelief, and await the explanation from the pundits hopefully, in order that understanding may be awakened appreciation. Yours sincerely,
BARBARA SPRING
Saltash, Cornwall
29 November

From Mr Paul Gynor
Sir: As one of the protesters at the Tate Gallery this Monday who temporarily prevented people exercising their right to view two dead carcasses, I must express my disappointment at the moral bankruptcy of the judges of the Turner Prize and the winning artist.

However you view the exhibit, given the chance, it increased the demand for dead animals by two, created unnecessary suffering and death and cheapened the life of a mother and child.

Apparently the judges were impressed by the artist's ability to deal with the issues of life and death. To give a more cutting edge to the subject, may I suggest that in his next piece he merely directs people to their local slaughterhouse where they can really experience the horrors awaiting the 750 million animals that we kill every year to satisfy our crav-

ing to consume animal flesh. A true artist should be able to represent life and death - not be the cause of it. Justice may yet be done should the artist be reincarnated as a dairy cow. Yours sincerely,
PAUL GYNOR
Office Manager
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
London, NW1
29 November

From Mr W. K. Harper
Sir: In her eulogy of Damien Hirst's work (29 November) Louisa Buck says "he produces images that lodge themselves in the psyche... at the same time mundane and massive... spectacle with profound meditations... his work grabs you by the throat... it proves that art can be funny, poetic and profound... it is as simple or as complex as you want it to be." All this in praise of a blown-up textile pattern or perhaps an arrangement of Smarties done in an idle moment? Very profound.

Incidentally, how does a calf preserved in "deadly poison" have "eternal life"? Yours sincerely,
W. K. HARPER
Tunstall,
Stoke-on-Trent
9 November



'Mother and child divided': How does a calf preserved in poison have 'eternal life'? Nick Turpin

Call for clarity on Nigeria debate

From Professor A. Bolaji Akinyemi
Sir: Regarding the ongoing debate on your pages between Anita Roddick (Another View, 28 November) and your correspondents (Letters, 1 December) on Shell and Ogoniland, the central issue seems to be getting out of focus.

The real issue is: are the operational standards of Shell in the Delta area of Nigeria comparable to its operational standards in other parts of the world - especially in the developed world? From all available reports, including those of your correspondent in Nigeria, David Orr (30 November and 1 December), the standards of Shell fall below what would be accepted in Europe and the US.

It is no defence for anyone to argue that a multinational operating in the Third World has to conform to the Third World business environment. The consequence of such an argument is that when nationals of a

Third World country and the international community become outraged at the business environment of that country, multinationals which have become part of the environment cannot claim innocence. That is the case with Nigeria, Shell and Ogoniland.

The solution is an international convention stipulating that multinationals are under an obligation to have comparable operational standards all over the world. As a first step, western countries should legislate that multinationals registered in their countries should conform to western operational standards in their operations in the Third World, just as the US Congress has legislated that US corporations cannot engage in corrupt practices abroad. That some will always break the law should not deter serious consideration of this approach.

Yours sincerely,
A. BOLAJI AKINYEMI
London, W2
The writer is a former Nigerian Foreign Minister, now with the pro-democracy movement in Nigeria.

And top o' th' morning to ya

From Mr David Craig
Sir: Please inform John Walsh (Diary, 30 November) that the people of Belfast do not speak as if they require a decongestant!

I am afraid that he is guilty of typcasting all "Irish" accents as resembling a Dublin brogue.

An Ulster accent is very distinct compared to one from the South, as I am sure one would gather from news items.

What will he have next week; us all drinking Guinness, eating potatoes, and saying, "By Gerrah, and top o' th' morning to ya"?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID CRAIG
Belfast
30 November

I'm sorry, I haven't a queue

From Mr G. Meynell
Sir: I am having trouble with Health Service ethics. Is it wrong to use my money to jump the queue (as I grew up thinking) or wrong to clog the queue if I can afford to pay?

I suppose all Independent readers but me believe the latter, but I am confused. Yours faithfully,
G. MEYNELL
Derby
27 November

Organised fun

From Ms Catherine Ennis
Sir: I was interested to read David Lister's article (17 November) describing a whole range of activities in London that are free of charge. Surprisingly, he omitted one of the longest running traditions in free events to be had in London - the organ recital.

In the Square Mile of the City of London 100 years or so ago, lunchtime organ recitals were provided as an oasis of calm and inspiration for City employees. Today's audiences also include tourists and those who take in a concert as part of a day's outing to town. Here too is often a sanctuary for eat-

ing a packed lunch. High-quality organs abound, despite a decline in church-going and therefore career opportunities.

More than in any other city in the world, a plethora of glorious music on fine organs in superb historic settings awaits the visitor to London, and not just in the City itself. From SW1 (Westminster Cathedral) to NW1 (St Marylebone Parish Church), W1 (Grosvenor Chapel) to SE1 (Southwark Cathedral), you can catch an organ concert each day of the week. Yours faithfully,
CATHERINE ENNIS
Organist, St Lawrence Jewry
next Guildhall
London, EC2

Off the Budget

From Mr William Rice
Sir: I wish to express my disgust at the Budget proposal to reduce the amount of housing benefit paid to those, like myself, who are under 25 and live in private rented accommodation.

The proposal is designed to be an incentive to work. I visit the job centre twice a day, every day, and have applied for countless jobs without success. I am not unemployed by choice. To anyone under 25 the message is clear, ensure you've got a job, because if you dare lose it, the state will clobber you. Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM RICE
Port Glasgow

First Lady 'hatchet job'

From Baroness Blackstone and Ms Elizabeth Symons
Sir: We wonder whether Polly Toynbee ("What have they done to Hillary?", 30 November) was at the same meeting we attended at the American Embassy on Wednesday.

Her report was a serious misrepresentation of an interesting and stimulating discussion. What Ms Toynbee describes as "buzz words" are real issues to many women, as those on zero-hours contracts and pitiful pay for part-timers know all too well. A wide variety of views was expressed, put with both determination and humour. It was a conversation in which Ms Clinton freely participated, demonstrating a reflective intelligence and considerable knowledge of the issues.

Had Polly Toynbee listened to the conversation, instead of trying to dictate it through her own agenda of questions to Mrs Clinton, she might have had a clearer understanding of what was going on.

Journalists who attend meetings of this kind, and then do a hatchet job on their host, are the cause of the "anoedynic views" and "carefully manicured" words that Polly Toynbee deplores. Yours faithfully,
TESSA BLACKSTONE
Master, Birkbeck College
ELIZABETH SYMONS
General Secretary
The Association of First Division Civil Servants
London, SW1

From Mr J. T. Turnbull
Sir: Commiserations to Polly Toynbee on her disappointment that her coffee morning with Hillary Clinton didn't turn out to be the feminist whinge-in she had hoped for. She responded by pouring scorn on the First Lady for the unpardonable sin of admitting to loving her husband, and castigated her for challenging the feminist dogma that single parenthood is a good thing (even while admitting that she is right).

This was followed by the interesting argument that sisters shouldn't speak the truth in case it played into the hands of the pro-family opposition! But perhaps Ms Toynbee could have struck a blow for social and sexual equality by refusing the invitation to a reception where the guest list was based on privilege and gender.

Yours faithfully,
J. T. TURNBULL
London, SE3

Duty to the truth

From Ms Anna Freeman
Sir: Virginia Ironside (Dilemma, 30 November) perpetuates the lie that Father Christmas isn't a lie but a myth, and indeed that myths aren't lies at all. It may be all right for parents, and adults in general, to repeat myths that they believe are true, such as God and heaven; but it is surely wrong to repeat myths that we know are false. I find it shocking that any responsible person should seriously argue in favour of telling children deliberate lies.

Yours faithfully,
ANNA FREEMAN
Leighton Buzzard

DAVID AARONOVITCH

Love thy whinger



Stop! Restrain yourself. Botch it up. If thy neighbour offends thee, forget it. Should he nick your dustbin, offer him your compost heap. Otherwise you risk becoming one of those whose minor irritations turn inexorably into savage hatreds, whose lives are devoted to petty acts of aggrandisement and revenge.

Almost every day we read of neighbours who fall out because of the noise made by pet rabbits or, in one famous case, the intolerable racket made by next door's breeding hamsters (was there, perhaps, a hewhiskered Meg Ryan equivalent, given to crying out "Eeeee, eeee, eeeee" at the point of rodentine climax?). This week we have had the latest instalment in a 16-year hedge battle between pensioners Charles Stanton and Michael Jones. Back in 1971, when Edward Heath was Prime Minister and T Rex were in the charts, Mr Stanton planted a row of fast-growing conifers at the bottom of his garden. Mr Jones watched as, over the years, the plants grew to 25ft, blotting out the sun's rays and casting his own garden into Stygian gloom.

In 1979, friendly discussion having failed, Mr J took action and solicitor's letters were exchanged. Meanwhile the cypresses shot above the 30ft mark. Eventually, Mr S grudgingly consented to the trees being reduced to 22ft, thus safeguarding his privacy against all but the faintest of glances.

But six years ago, the dispute took a new twist. Mr J decided that 15ft was a better height, took the saw into his own hands, and lopped off a further 60 inches. And then another 48 inches.

Maggie went, the Gulf war was fought, Yugoslavia imploded. Over in Bournville, injunctions were being granted and courts were giving rulings. Peace broke out in Ulster and finally, on Thursday, Mr Stanton lost his last case. He now faces a bill for £50,000 in costs.

If Mr Jones has shown remarkable persistence, Mr Stanton's behaviour represents one of the Psychological Wonders of the modern world. It is

obstinacy taken to religious extremes - a life and a fortune spent preserving a few ridiculously tall plants from a much-needed cutting. Why on earth did he do it?

The answer is no doubt logical in its own terms, however hard it may be to sympathise with. Mr S may have believed in the inalienable rights of shrubs to grow, and regarded tampering with them as interfering with nature.

Or perhaps he reasoned that Mr Jones's secret pruning broke a solemn compact, proving that the former teacher was one of those who, given an inch, would take a mile. A man who can surreptitiously take an axe to his neighbour's hedge will think nothing of encroaching on his boundaries and invading his garden. Sooner or later there would have been elderly orgies among the Stanton pconies and wrinkled runbles between the ramblers.

But Mr Stanton also almost certainly engaged in this dispute because he enjoyed it. The hedge row gave social shape and context to his life, where otherwise it might have been empty. Deprived of retirement of his power and influence, the hedge has been the focus of his considerable emotional and organisational energy. Bluntly, he had nothing better to do.

If so, the obvious remedy is displacement therapy: give the likes of Mr Stanton something else to worry about. Judges and magistrates should, for instance, have the power secretly to add such people to the panels of listeners and viewers employed by the BBC to provide feedback on programmes. This would give most of them enough to whinge about until the Grim Reaper comes a-calling.

If this fails, they should be compelled to host their own late-night chat show on local talk radio, where they can vent to their feelings about the world - about horn-tooting cabbies, illicit conifer cutters, horny hamsters and all the other thousand natural shocks that English flesh is heir to.

Not only will this keep them out of the courts, it might also entertain the rest of us at the same time.

QUOTE UNQUOTE

Words can be sexy and eyes can be sexy. I don't think you need to see naked bodies writhing around all the time - Meg Ryan, one of a growing number of film actresses who won't strip for the camera.

I cannot remember when I last saw a film, but I am told it is important nowadays to have a bit of nudity to make it sell to the public - Viscount Devereux, Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire.

The cut is nonsensical, totally irrational and deeply boring - Stephen Daldry, artistic director of the Royal Court Theatre, London, on the £5m cut in the Arts Council budget.

The trouble with being off the drink is that you remember clearly the next morning what you did the night before, and when you're off the drink there's nothing worth remembering from the night before - Richard Harris, actor and reformed hell-raiser.

I could play Camilla Parker-Bowles. I could ugly up for that - Joan Collins, when asked if she would star in a royal soap opera.

It was as if Brady and Hindley had got married and kept killing for 20 years - Howard Soules, author of the first book on the West trial.

Marriage, not cohabitation, is the institution which is at the heart of the good society and let us not be reluctant to say so as a Church - The Archbishop of Canterbury.

Keeping the faith – and no messing

Dr George Carey is not the type to stand by while his church sanctions living in sin, says Andrew Brown

It is a curious commentary on the state of the Church of England that the Archbishop of Canterbury should make front-page news by announcing that marriage is preferable to cohabitation. Yet Dr George Carey has just reaped his most sustained harvest of favourable publicity since he was chosen by Mrs Thatcher, by speaking up this week in defence of the conventional family at the General Synod.

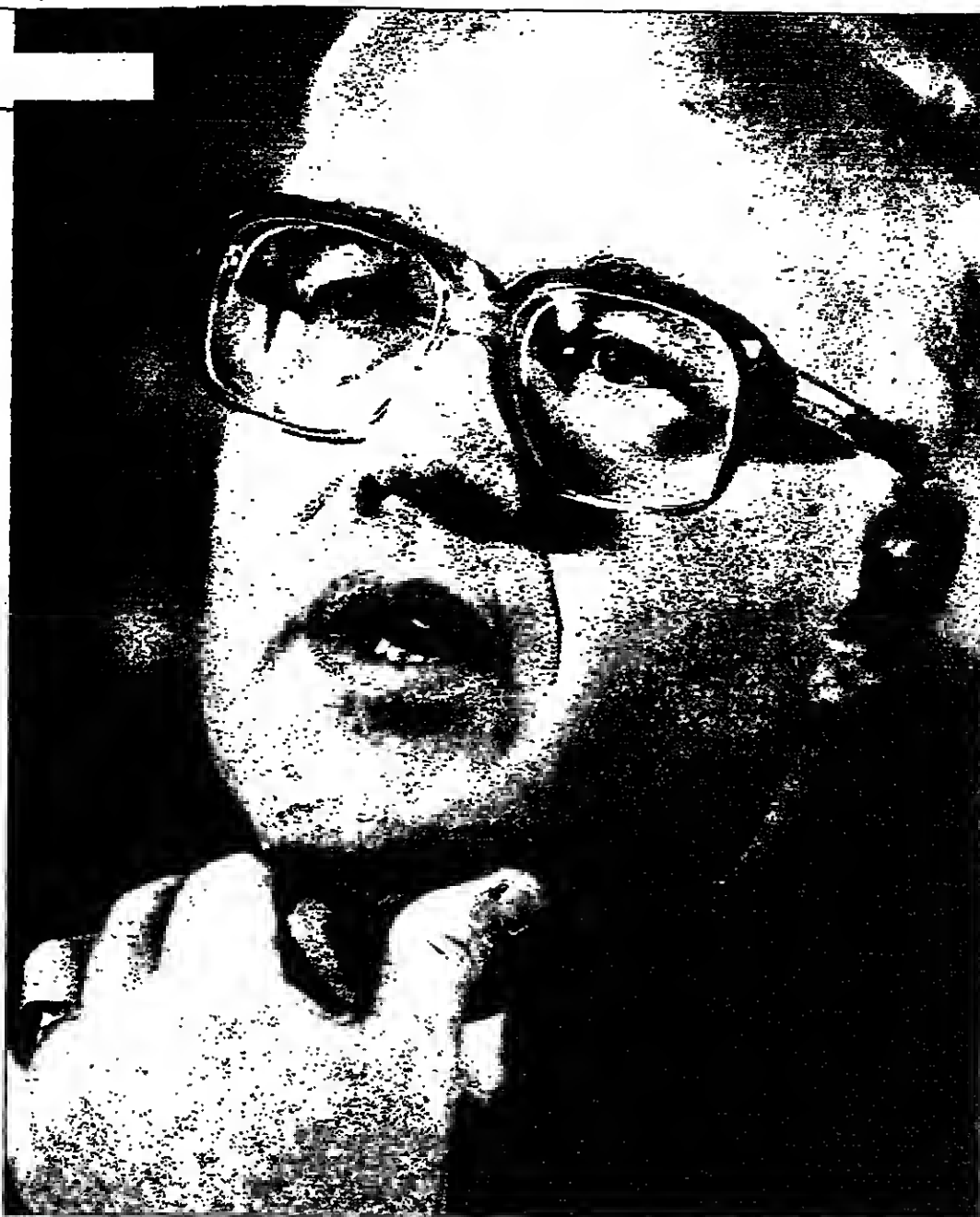
It was not the first time Dr Carey has defended marriage: at the time of the David Mellor scandal he urged adulterous cabinet ministers to resign, on the grounds that anyone who systematically deceives his wife is not to be trusted in other areas of life. But this time his words had added dramatic effect, because he was rebuking his own church for producing a report advocating the abandonment of the use of the phrase "living in sin".

The problem the report was trying to tackle was that some evangelical priests have been refusing to marry couples who live together if they do not perform a public act of repentance, and even refusing to baptise their babies. But in criticising that puritanism, the report

inable" that he should ever be unfaithful to his wife Eileen. This sort of loud self-confidence comes naturally to him. It is one of the qualities that makes him attractive to the evangelicals who lobbied hard for him as successor to Robert Runcie in 1990. Carey's appointment came as a big surprise: he had only been a diocesan bishop for two and a half years, and was a generation younger than most of the men tipped for the succession.

His self-confidence immediately dropped him into a succession of diplomatic disasters: he said some opponents of women priests were guilty of "a very grave heresy"; his first visit to the Sudan led to the expulsion of the British ambassador there; on a trip to China he condemned bible-smuggling, which is a traditional Christian response to totalitarianism.

But nothing dents his brash approach for long. Last week he announced that he was to visit Sarajevo, to express his solidarity with the people there. Never mind the fact that there aren't any Anglicans in Sarajevo, Dr Carey sees himself as a world spiritual leader, as he told the United Nations in September;



Carey's vision: vicar to the nation and world spiritual leader

Edward Sykes

ing and shrunken church. But it is all of a piece with the church through which he rose. He was born in London's East End in 1935, the second of five children; his family, he says, were what the Bible would call God-fearers. "They took their membership of the Church of England quite seriously, even if they didn't actually go," he told the author Mary Louden, with

book, the congregation was full of earnest high-mindedness, and the vicar was known by a silly nickname (Pit-Pat). He now dislikes the label of evangelical, but his entire career in the Church of England has been within evangelical parishes or theological colleges; and his supporters are almost without exception evangelicals themselves.

The term "evangelical" has little doctrinal meaning left. It is more a matter of style. When an archbishop says, as this one did yesterday, that life as an Anglican ought to be "tremendously exciting, tremendously important, and tremendously full of surprises," you might expect a wave of embarrassment to run around the old-fashioned Church of England like a Mexican fringe. But gentlemanly self-deprecation is old-fashioned now. The strength of evangelicals is now their confidence with power and modernity; their churches have the newest computer systems. They don't expect to be in decline, even when they are; they believe that the right combination of technique and prayer will put the church back on the road to growth.

What they don't believe in is soft-headed accommodation to modern secular trends, however close to home those may be. Two of Dr Carey's own four children have been through divorces and one is remarried. "None has cohabited though. And the whole family has stayed churchy; one son is a curate, one works on the Church of England Newspaper, and one is a steward at the Archbishop's palace in Canterbury."

Dr Carey's confidence in the face of modern society's muddled values speaks to his battered church. Its membership is still declining, but an optimist can point to the 200 churches planted in the past six years. Nearly 300 priests have left over the ordination of women; but an optimist points out that this number is far fewer than threatened to leave.

For decades the Church of England has been attacked for equivocation, over-sensitivity, and unnecessary intellectual refinement. Carey is bereft of these faults, and their concomitant virtues. He knows what he wants for the church and for the nation: "We have to get back to the kind of basic standards which come from a strong Christian tradition and strong churches which are making their contribution to the life of our nation." Here is the certain trumpet. Will anyone be listening?

It was all a matter of nuance, but he saw the opportunity for firm leadership and grabbed it with both hands

appeared to be, saying that the Church of England should fully accept cohabitation.

It was all a matter of nuance, but Dr Carey saw the opportunity for firm leadership and grabbed it with both hands: the public hearing he administered to the report was quite unprecedented, and left the Bishop responsible for house with pain and anger in his response.

Dr Carey himself has been married since the age of 24; he once told an interviewer that it was "unimag-

and though half the Church of England winces with embarrassment at such pushiness, the other half loves every minute.

As Archbishop, he carries on exactly like the go-getting vicar he was when he first impressed a powerful evangelical clique in Durham in the Seventies. Indeed, a recent church report described his office as "vicar to the nation" as well as "world spiritual leader". It is both a grandiose and a shrunken vision that may turn out to fit a flounder-

characteristically optimistic spin.

When he was four, his family moved to Dagenham in Essex, but he still refers to himself as an East Ender, and his appreciation of old-fashioned working class communities and their values shines through all his comments on society. He failed his eleven plus and left school at 15 with no qualifications.

At the age of 18 he became a committed Christian in an old-fashioned evangelical church, where the worship was straight from the prayer

Glamour for Everygirl

Tamsin Blanchard examines the lasting magic of the *Clothes Show*

It is a Girl's World come to life, a non-stop whirlwind of glamorous clothes, makeovers by hair and make-up teams, catwalk shows, bright lights, pulsating music, camera flash, leggy models and, to top it all, the Cheshire Cat grin of fashion king Jeff Banks. The *Clothes Show Live* event at Birmingham's NEC started yesterday and by the end of the weekend will have attracted almost 250,000 schoolgirls, their older sisters, their boyfriends and mothers. Dreams come true at *Clothes Show Live*. There is always the possibility of being scooped from the crowd and on to the world's largest catwalk, alongside superstar models like Jodie Kidd and Marcus Schenkenberg. It's designed to leave all participants on a high.

But behind the glossy lipstick and the shimmering eyeshadow, the *Clothes Show Live* is big business. For many designers, it is as important as the trade shows held at the same venue twice a year. This weekend the designers get to meet their market and, more importantly, where their clothes will be sold. Last year £2.50 was spent every minute and by the end of the six-day period, visitors had parted with £8m.

For many designers, the annual event comes at a perfect time. They have just finished selling their collections for next summer and the event boosts cash flow in the run up to Christmas. In a business that is all about hype and marketing, it is the greatest promotional event of all with a captive market, over half of whom are young women aged 16-25.

The BBC's *Clothes Show* programme (there is also a highly successful spin off magazine) is 10 years old next year. It is something of a mystery to the TV executives who can't quite comprehend how the mix of high street bargains, designer frocks, and wedding dresses picks up some eight million viewers – 39 per cent of the audience share on Sunday afternoon.

When Jeff Banks, then running his successful Warehouse

chain, and television producer Roger Casstles made the first pilot of the *Clothes Show* in 1983, it took them three years before it was actually accepted. "No one wanted it," says Banks. "But I was obsessed about getting fashion on television." His status as an industry insider and his slightly camp brand of enthusiasm are now essential to the show's formula.

The first show went out in 1986 and after only three programmes, its success was obvious. "The appeal of the programme is not just the presenters, it's the modish things that the public has for the subject," Banks says. It was the first programme to treat fashion in any depth and it still, if not the only, one of a sparse handful of nationally networked fashion programmes in the world.

Before *The Clothes Show*, ordinary people felt intimidated by fashion. Jeff Banks and the other presenters have introduced the public to designers whose clothes most people can never hope to afford. The clothes are made accessible, modelled by real people and catwalk trends are

translated for people whose lives do not revolve around hem lines. The show aims to include everyone, from brides (the Bride of the Year competition allows the winner to have a designer wedding) to the brownies (Jeff Banks redesigned their uniforms on-screen). This is fashion at its most basic, grassroots level.

By focusing on the personalities in the industry as much as the clothes, it has become a kind of Top of the Pops, a formula that appeals to everyone (except for the snobbish fashion elite who tend to sneer). Ten years ago, the woman in the street would not have known who John Galiano was. Now, the designer is recognised in the street by autograph hunters. And while the postbags at the *Clothes Show's* Birmingham office keep on piling up, Jeff Banks' vision has paid off. On the music explodes, the models sashay and the crowds mar-

Jodie Kidd walks the catwalk at the market gets to meet them. Last

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A formula for reviving Irish spirits

Bill Clinton's visit was a great excuse for a great party. But it meant more, says David McKittrick

Belfast, as somebody once remarked, is not at all a typical Irish city: it has more in common with the Scottish or northern English cities that sprang up with the industrial revolution, and shares many of their characteristics.

In one of its aspects it is tough, dour, grumpy, with a take-it-or-leave-it attitude, a city of no airs and graces – personified, in fact, by Van Morrison, who this week served as the warm-up act for Bill Clinton at the city hall. That facet has been to the fore ever since the paramilitary ceasefires of 1994, which were greeted with a mixture of relief and caution. It took the presidential visit to liberate another of the city's aspects, at last allowing it to show its warm, welcoming, even joyous face.

In doing so, the visit not only provided the occasion for a release of goodwill but also consolidated and cemented the peace process. It was more than just a great party: it may turn out to be a truly historic turning point, for in a single day almost all of the lingering doubts about the peace were swept away.

Many trials and obstacles will have to be surmounted in the months and years ahead, but this week's events have immeasurably strengthened the process. The preceding weeks had produced a series of ever-gloomier assessments from republicans, and latterly from security sources. Both elements warned that the process was becoming unstable as the arms decommissioning impasse dragged on. Tuesday night's Anglo-Irish summit, since overshadowed by the Clinton visit, did much to relieve the pressures. Even in the absence of agreement between Dublin and London, its carefully balanced formula set up an international body on decommissioning and moved towards talks. It was, in effect, an offer that, politically, Sinn Féin and the IRA could not refuse and, for the moment at least, it dispelled most of the dangerous tensions.



Clinton in Northern Ireland: the signs are that US involvement will reassure all parties Photograph: F. Spooner

While the ingenious intricacies of the summit communiqué have supplied a technical framework for the next few months, the Clinton visit delivered an extraordinary injection of momentum, enthusiasm, fresh heart and new spirit. His message that the violence was over for good was radiated back to him from the thousands who stood in the cold to hear him and cheer him.

On 31 August, on the first anniversary of the IRA cessation of violence, the streets in front of the city hall were empty: no one felt able to celebrate. On Thursday night, with Clinton as the catalyst, tens of thousands clapped, cheered, waved their US flags and finally allowed their

feelings to come out into the open.

The fact that the crowd was made up of both Catholics and Protestants is a tribute to Clinton's political skills. Throughout 1994, his name was mud with Unionists as, in the face of stiff British opposition, he granted Gerry Adams visas to visit the States and allowed him to fund-raise there (a boon that has netted Sinn Féin hundreds of thousands of dollars and has probably made it Ireland's richest political party).

Clinton's is the first US administration to make a serious study of the politics of Northern Ireland, and certainly the first to intervene in them. No American president had ever visited Northern Ireland before this week. JFK

deciding in 1963 not to venture north of the border.

This was largely because American administrations were perceived as pro-Irish nationalists. Indeed, many saw Clinton in this light in 1994. Since then, however, his position has evolved considerably: he has made particular efforts to mend fences with London while, as he demonstrated in Dublin yesterday, remaining on good terms with the Irish government.

His warmest praise was reserved for SDLP leader John Hume, who clearly has a major input into American decision-making. But Clinton has also made a special effort to build bridges to Unionists, offering special access to Unionist leader David Trimble and

establishing relations with loyalist paramilitary groups.

Keeping all sides in the conflict reasonably happy is no easy task, but the tumultuous welcomes he received in Belfast and Londonderry showed he has succeeded in doing so. (His coolest reception, from the Rev Ian Paisley, is regarded as pretty much par for the Paisley course.)

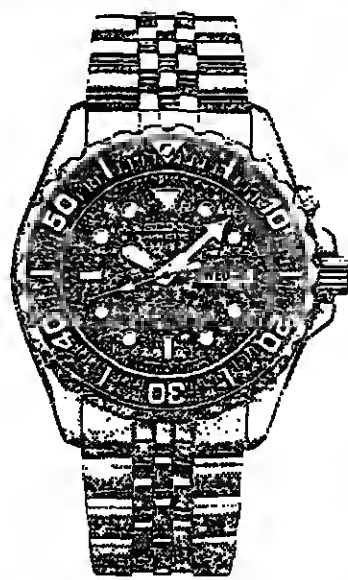
Clinton's popularity was not earned by retreating into anyone's generalisations about peace. The most important messages in his speeches this week were that the violence must be over for good and that formerly violent prodigals should be welcomed into politics. He declared in Belfast: "You must be willing to say that those who renounce violence are entitled to be part of the democratic process."

In emphasising this last week he voiced no criticism of the British government but made it clear that his approach is the speedy construction of an inclusive settlement. In doing so he places more emphasis on the need for dialogue than London has displayed.

In his approach Clinton is of course hopeful of netting Irish-American votes, but his analysis goes much deeper than that. He, like Dublin, believes that the best way to deal with republicans is to draw them over-deeper into the political net. He believes his decision to allow Adams into the States was vindicated in that it helped facilitate the IRA ceasefire.

The appointment of his close friend and ally George Mitchell as head of the decommissioning body is an indication that the US will remain a major player in the peace process. Many Unionists and many in Britain may have instinctive reservations about continuing US involvement, but the fact is that it is here to stay. This week all the signs were, from the people on the streets of Belfast, that they wholeheartedly approve of the fact that their peace process has become an international issue.

Good-bye battery



Seiko Kinetic®. The first and only quartz watch that generates its own energy from your every movement. The perpetual accuracy of quartz – naturally, without a battery. Its tiny powerhouse converts even your slightest movement into electrical impulses. Ecologically sound and ultimately reliable. Seiko Kinetic is so efficient that you only need to wear it for one day to ensure enough energy reserves to last at least a week. Wear it continually and it will never let you down. It's built to last. Someday all watches will be made this way.

SEIKO KINETIC

Foreign Exchange Rates									
STERLING					DOLLAR			D-MARK	
Country	Spot	1 month	3 months		Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot	
US	163.08	11.9	27.04		1000	—	—	0.6826	
Canada	32.75	2.1	1.39		138.94	—	—	42.52	138.48
France	259.01	22.45	50.140		141.91	21.9	—	53.25	140.90
Germany	74.861	4.22	10.70		145.60	—	—	32.25	74.655
Italy	215.53	55.80	205.24		162.52	14.7	—	105.94	70.10
Japan	165.87	10.9	25.229		10.33	60.49	—	143.10	70.87
ECU	14.634	1.47	34.77		1.7788	3.55	—	0.549	—
Belgium	25.74	4.9	13.47		25.73	4.13	—	116.10	25.733
Denmark	32.70	3.1	1.73		149.94	20.4	—	37.70	149.94
Netherlands	14.26	610.822	1773.820		18.55	25.25	—	7.25	14.200
Ireland	93.67	9.7	22.10		138.81	0.3	—	5.8	93.67
Monaco	37.656	150.36	291.74		6.3000	3.25	—	2.75	37.656
Spain	155.17	45.52	155.53		13.33	36.40	—	44.025	—
Sweden	12.833	1.25	62.73		145.64	32.32	—	136.450	12.833
Switzerland	17.080	1.7	1.20		17.95	17.95	—	35.45	17.080
Yugoslavia	20.78	7.49	5.41		6.3376	17.15	—	25.95	20.78
Hong Kong	14.642	55.6	16		77.363	13.15	—	30.43	14.642
Malaysia	18.876	—	—		23.537	—	—	5.7	18.876
Philippines	37.62	37	37		156.14	—	—	11.29	37.62
Saudi Arabia	2.854	0.4	0.4		2.7657	—	—	0.15	2.854
Singapore	23.033	5.0	0.4		14.045	2.32	—	10.35	23.033

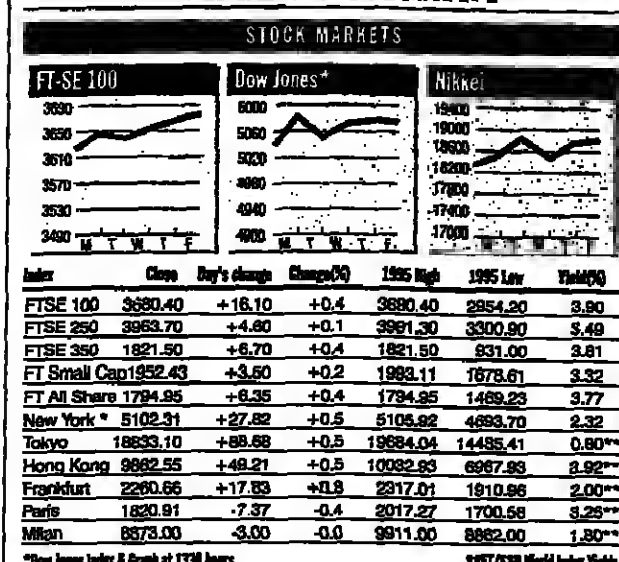
OTHER SPOT RATES									
Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar				
Argentina	15.885	0.0892	Hong Kong	0.0339	0.0000				
Brazil	0.5560	0.0001	India	0.0366	0.0366				
Canada	14.792	0.0607	Pakistan	32.873	341.55				
France	27.778	0.0001	Peru	22.260	0.0001				
Spain	5.2020	0.0057	Portugal	12.962	0.1435				
Finland	5.8354	0.2398	Russia	2.574	0.0495				
Germany	17.730	0.0001	Saudi Arabia	7.018	0.0001				
Greece	36.2023	0.0070	South Africa	51.930	0.0694				
Italy	33.5328	0.0001	Taiwan	15.955	0.0001				
Japan	0.4421	0.0001	Thailand	7.6250	0.0001				

Note: Forward rates quoted here are for 3 to 24 months. Except for spot rates, these are quoted as 2 to 3 years are the most common. All rates are for US dollars unless otherwise specified. All rates are for 100 units of foreign currency unless otherwise specified.

Tourist Rates									
£/Euro					£/Yen				
Germany/Dollars	1.2202	Switzerland/Dollars	2.7850		France/Yen	2.6031		2.3310	
US/£/Dollars	2.5521	Germany/Marks	2.6031		Netherlands/Yen	92.240		92.240	
France/£/Dollars	2.5521	Italy/Marks	2.6031		Spain/Yen	207.5000		207.5000	
Germany/Francs	1.2202	Hong Kong/Dollars	0.0607		Switzerland/Yen	92.240		92.240	
Italy/Francs	1.2202								

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MARKET SUMMARY



MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Price	Change	% Change
Coltch Group	602	5.7
British Telecom	1675	1.2
Guardian Royal	292	6.1
Pearson	682	5.1
Perpetual	1726	5.0

INTEREST RATES

Short sterling	UK medium gilt	US long bond
6.00	6.00	7.00
6.25	6.25	6.75
6.50	6.50	6.50
6.75	6.75	6.25
7.00	7.00	6.00

Money Market Rates

Rate	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year
UK	6.69	6.32	7.52	7.48
US	5.81	5.44	5.81	7.81
Japan	0.34	0.38	0.34	4.63
Germany	4.06	3.79	4.06	7.28

CURRENCIES

£/\$	£/DM	£/¥
1.58	2.28	162.0
1.57	2.27	161.0
1.56	2.26	160.0
1.55	2.25	159.0
1.54	2.24	158.0
1.53	2.23	157.0

Commodities

Commodity	Price	Change	% Change
Oil (Brent)	17.275	+0.225	1.3
Gold	386.55	-1.15	-0.3
Base Metals	251.98	-1.5	-0.6

OTHER INDICATORS

Indicator	Value	Change	% Change
Oil Brent	17.275	+0.225	1.3
Gold	386.55	-1.15	-0.3
Base Metals	251.98	-1.5	-0.6

IN BRIEF

Deregulation body for power industry

The electricity industry has been told to establish a new executive body to implement deregulation in 1998 and to set out a detailed plan by the end of January. The recommendations were in a report from PA Consulting commissioned by the electricity regulator, Professor Stephen Littlechild. He said the main responsibility for the changes, which will introduce competition into domestic electricity supply, rested with the electricity companies and generators. There has been mounting criticism of the industry's lack of preparation.

Completion expected for Bancorp sale

NatWest Group is expected to complete the sale next week of its New Jersey-based US retail banking arm, Bancorp, for a sum believed to be over £2bn. Speculation as to the buyer has centered on Fleet Financial, the acquisitive New England bank, as well as the Bank of New York, First Fidelity and Nationsbank. HSBC, the London-based international bank which owns Midland, took an early interest but is believed to have pulled out of the running. NatWest Group has decided to abandon its position as a small retail player in the US, switching the resources into building up its investment banking activities in New York.

British Gas reduces rises for shippers

British Gas has cut back and delayed planned increases in the charges for gas shippers who use its pipelines, to nearly half the level announced in September. Overall charges will increase by 1.9 per cent compared with almost 4 per cent, which was first proposed. The move follows pressure from shippers, which account for 40 per cent of the market.

Bank of Western Australia float

Bank of Western Australia (BankWest), which was bought by the Bank of Scotland for \$900m in September, said offers for the float of 49 per cent of the Perth-based bank are expected to open on 8 January. Standard & Poor's, the rating agency, lowered its long and short-term ratings of Bank of Scotland debt by one notch due to the impact of the purchase on the bank's capital. Despite this, Bank of Scotland's shares rose 15p to 285p.

Restructuring at BA

The board of British Airways yesterday agreed a restructuring of middle and senior management. A number of staff are likely to go or be redeployed because the new chief executive, Robert Ayling, wants to streamline the reporting structure.

Welsh Water in Swalec discussions

Welsh Water was in intensive discussions yesterday with its advisers over whether to launch a hostile £850m bid for Swalec, the South Wales electricity company, which the City believes could come as early as Monday. On Thursday, Swalec rejected an informal 91p-a-share offer to secure board agreement, and Welsh Water said a hostile bid was one of its options.

Kvaerner lifts Amec stake

Kvaerner has lifted its stake in the UK contractor Amec by another 1.1 per cent, taking its holding to 18.1 per cent. The Norwegian company is on Monday expected to release the terms of offer for the preference shares, which analysts now believe will involve some sort of loan note.

Coal Investments calls for 'rescue funds'

DAVID HELLIER

The future of Malcolm Edwards, the former British Coal commercial director, was in doubt yesterday as his coal-mining group said it planned to raise further capital in what is being seen as a "rescue rights" issue.

Years since taking over parts of British Coal. Sources close to the company said its bankers and shareholders wanted Mr Edwards, who is currently executive chairman, to remain with the group. "He is very valuable to the business," one source said. But they added that they would try to strengthen senior management to bring in somebody to perform the chief executive's role.

Others in the City were less sure about Mr Edwards' ability to stay on. "He may be a good salesman but the City is definitely questioning Mr Edwards' ability to run a public company after this," one City coal analyst said yesterday.

In October Mr Edwards told an annual meeting of the company's shareholders that the group would be profitable by the end of the financial year. The group, which bought a number of pits from British Coal including Hem Heath, Silverdale and Markham, has been beset by production problems that have ratcheted up costs whilst adversely affecting revenues.

Yesterday's announcement came after a sharp fall in the share price of Coal Investments. The price of the shares fell 26p to 30p at their low point as investors worried about the company's ability to continue paying its suppliers. The shares closed at 35p, down 21p.

The company said it "has agreed terms with its bankers for the removal by them of certain conditions attaching to the extension of existing credit facilities in order to enable the company to meet its currently anticipated cash requirements."

Sky wars: Broadcaster's shares slump as pressure from small cable companies produces inquiry

Regulator investigates BSkyB grip on pay-TV

MATTHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

BSkyB's tight grip on the pay-TV market was yesterday thrown into doubt as the Office of Fair Trading announced a wide-ranging inquiry into the broadcaster's near-monopoly in the UK.

Shares in the BSkyB, 40 per cent owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, plunged 9p in mid-day trading, before recovering to close at 428.5p, down 5.5p.



Vision, guts and a near-monopoly: Rupert Murdoch (left) and Sam Chisholm of BSkyB



At risk are the company's supply arrangements with cable operators, as well as its exclusive sport deals, particularly for football. Jonathan Hellwell, analyst at James Capel, said: "The share price is bound to be volatile on the way down, just as it has been on the way up."

The OFT is looking into whether BSkyB's contracts to broadcast sport, including Premier League football, exclusively, are a breach of competition law. Sport has been the key driver of the company's success, and any loss of sport revenue would have an impact on its profitability, analysts said.

The OFT's investigation into BSkyB's sports contracts comes under an old and cumbersome piece of legislation which the Government has promised to tighten. The Department of Trade and Industry has indicated that it will give the OFT powers to prohibit restrictive practices as soon as they come to light and to levy fines immediately.

This would be part of a package of measures, including new powers for the OFT to seize documents and raid premises, which the Government announced that it favoured as long ago as 1993.

However, promised legislation to implement the powers has failed to materialise in successive Queen's Speeches. Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade, is to publish a new consultation document on the issue early next year and is studying whether to introduce some of the changes without full-scale legislation.

The promised prohibition approach to restrictive practices would short-circuit the present procedure, under which agreements between firms must be registered.

OFT hampered by slow system

PETER RODGERS
Business Editor

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GEC's Yarrow wins £600m Brunei job

RUSSELL HOTTEN

GEC's Yarrow Shipbuilders, on Clydeside, has won a contract to build three patrol vessels for Brunei, thought to be worth about £600m.

The company, struggling under a lack of orders, said the work would help to secure jobs, but was unlikely to stop the 400 redundancies announced in September. "It is a major contract," a spokesman said.

GEC is also awaiting news on a UK order for up to three Type 23 frigates, which may be announced next week. Both GEC and its competitor for the contract, the Solent-based Vosper

Thornycroft, have warned about the implication for jobs if they lose the tender.

The Brunei order is for the design, construction, and integration of the weapons system, but several months' work has to be carried out on the specifications before building work starts.

Tesco hits out at 'misleading' ad

NIGEL COPE

Tesco, the supermarket group, has made a formal complaint to the Advertising Standards Authority about an animal rights advertisement which is attempting to stop the culling of seals in Canada.

The International Fund For Animal Welfare (IFAW) ran a full-page advertisement in one of yesterday's newspapers calling for Tesco chairman Sir Ian MacLaurin to ban Canadian salmon from its stores in order to increase pressure on the Canadian authorities to stop the culling.

Under a graphic illustration, the advertisement headline reads: "Every tin of Canadian salmon Tesco sells is another blow Sir Ian."

Tesco said it had made the complaint because it felt that the advertisement could be misleading. The company said yesterday: "Tesco does not condone the practice of seal culling but we believe this advert is misleading."



Graphic: The ad campaign branded 'cynical' by Canada

nothing to do with us. We think [this] trade is appalling. But it has nothing to do with tinned salmon."

The Canadians say the culling is necessary. At a press conference yesterday the Canadian High Commission said: "This cynical campaign, whose main purpose is to raise funds for the IFAW, is a further example of... alarmist propaganda. If this technique is allowed to prevail it will not end with one supermarket chain or one product."

The commission said that the culling had to be done to curb the burgeoning population of harp seals in the North Atlantic. It added that the number of seals had doubled to 5 million in the past five years, and that each seal can consume up to 1.4m tonnes of fish per year. The commission also said that only 3 per cent of seals are still clobbered. The rest are shot.

In a separate development, Tesco yesterday mailed out £40m of money-off and product offers to holders of its loyalty card. Members who have collected over 40 points, between 16 October and 12 November, will also be sent a turkey voucher worth £3.55. Tesco's Clubcard has over 6 million members, and more than 170,000 students have signed up for the company's student card.

Tunnel debt sold on at 37%

DAVID HELLIER

One of the bank lenders to Eurotunnel, the struggling operator of the Channel Tunnel, has sold its £5m debt in the company on the secondary market for 37 per cent of its value.

According to secondary debt market dealers this is the lowest price the debt has reached in the market.

Gary Klesch, whose company is a key trader in the secondary bank debt market, said: "I see the price going lower still because there is a potential overhang of debt, especially bearing in mind the fact that one-third of it is owned by the Japanese banks, many of whom are keen to sell."

According to Mr Klesch, the Japanese banks are under government pressure to make provision for as much doubtful overseas debt as possible.

When Eurotunnel declared a standstill on interest payment on junior debt in September, the company's price on the debt market fell from an offer price of around 70 per cent to 50 per cent.

Eurotunnel's main agent banks - Midland, National Westminster, Banque Nationale de Paris and Credit Lyonnais - are trying to put a refinancing package together. But bankers do not expect this to be finalised until the spring of next year at the earliest.

There's a lot of work to be done, in many different areas of the world, and it's not going to be resolved overnight," one banker said.

Shares in Eurotunnel closed the day down 3p at 92p.

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COMMENT

'The City is not easily side-tracked from the sniff of wealth beyond the dreams of avarice ... Everyone likes a stock market wonder company and, in British Biotech, we seem to have one.'

An excited City hails Biotech as 'next Glaxo'

Is British Biotech the next Glaxo or just another speculative bubble? The City is excitedly talking about it in the reverent tones of the former. The success of clinical trials on its BB-2516 cancer drug sent the shares soaring to £21 yesterday before falling back again. The finance director, Jim Noble, tried vainly to dampen the hysteria by warning that the drug had many obstacles to overcome before it becomes commercially available, possibly to three years, but he failed. Everyone likes a stock market wonder company and in British Biotech we seem to have one.

Mr Noble's caution is understandable as well as responsible. It prevents millions of cancer sufferers being offered false hope. It also allows the company to continue its development without being saddled with the wonder-drug tag. But the City is not easily side-tracked from the sniff of wealth beyond the dreams of avarice and the talk is of huge potential for the drug and huge share price potential for the company.

While extremely encouraging, the cancer data is very preliminary. However, British Biotech is more than a one-drug company. What really impresses analysts is the range of drugs the company has under development, all with enormous potential. This weekend British Biotech will release progress reports on another drug, BB-10010, which protects the immune system of patients undergoing chemotherapy. Its arthritis drug, BB-2963, goes into clinical tri-

als next year, with Glaxo Wellcome itself picking up the bill. Glaxo Wellcome is also paying for phase-two clinical trials for British Biotech's asthma drug. While health regulators need to be 100 per cent sure of a drug to give it approval, the stock market is not so demanding. If there is an even chance of British Biotech getting at least some of its products to market it will be enough to drive the share price, say analysts.

Good are the days when the big pharmaceutical companies threw expensive combinations of drugs at mice and men. British Biotech, with its intellectual base in Oxford University, sells itself as a company trying to provide solutions to the root causes of complaints which either affect millions or are very expensive to treat. Cancer has always been the great Holy Grail of modern medicine and the potential market is enormous if the drugs are good enough. With royalty agreements already in place, Glaxo Wellcome is already hovering on the sidelines. For the time being UK institutions are so convinced of the potential that anything less than a silly price would fail to tempt them. The upside for this stock still looks huge.

A first step to reining in Murdoch

Could it be that the year-long campaign by cable operators to rein in Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB has finally borne fruit?

On the face of it, yesterday's announcement that the Office of Fair Trading is to investigate the terms of Sky's supply of programming to cable operators is a sign that the Government (the DTI and OFT at any rate) is finally taking Mr Murdoch's dominant position seriously.

There is much at risk for BSkyB, which has acquired a powerful position in the UK television market by offering film and sport unavailable elsewhere. Cable operators, following efforts to develop their own sources of Hollywood product and top-level sport, gave in, and accepted that they would have to buy wholesale from Sky.

The problem from the cable operators' point of view was that BSkyB could set the price and the terms of supply. It could bundle channels together, obliging them to take both movie channels, for example, if they wanted to offer their subscribers Disney. A number of "informal undertakings" between the OFT and BSkyB failed to offer much remedy. Even after Sky's channels were ostensibly meant to be offered *à la carte*, cable operators found that they still had to take at least one movie channel if they wanted to get Disney. Typically for a company run along Mr Murdoch's preferred lines, every concession by BSkyB seemed to hide yet another condition. For every one issue on which the company apparently gave way, another two would emerge - vintage Murdoch.

This has become more than just a com-

mercial battle. Reining in Mr Murdoch has become an issue of public policy in the light of the advent of digital technology. BSkyB cannot be allowed to leverage its analogue dominance to take over the digital world as well. The OFT inquiry is a first step: wholesale programming must be available on transparent, unbundled terms. Next, the anti-competitive clauses of Sky's contracts (with Nynex, Telewest and the Premier League, for a start) must be quashed. Down the road, Sky's dominance of conditional access must be whittled down.

Finally, with the likely full-scale commercialisation of the BBC, the consolidation of the ITV sector and the advent of digital, it may even be time to bring BSkyB under more direct regulatory control. Why should Sky, unlike all the monopoly ITV companies, be able to avoid full and frank regulation? Clearly these are not matters for the OFT but at least Mr Bridgeman has realised that someone has to make a start.

Granada close to its goal

Less than two weeks into the Forté takeover battle and the Granada share price is already beginning to creep back from the drubbing it received in the immediate aftermath of the company's £3.2bn bid. Gerry Robinson, chief executive, still has a task to perform in convincing the City of the

merits of this takeover, but he is beginning to get there. In the meantime Forté looks as vulnerable as ever. There is enormous institutional shareholder support for this company. If Mr Robinson's task is still a hard one, Forté's is doubly so.

Forté's first formal defence document is out next week but unless there is something unexpected to pull out of the hat it is hard to see how it can further the argument very much. The track record is poor. While it might be possible to put some fancy sum-of-the-parts valuation on the company, such exercises are only meaningful if management is prepared to put the valuation with a wholesale breakup. Does Sir Rocco Forté really want to do that? He seems prepared to go further than Granada on this front but not the whole hog.

The other traditional strategy in a bid defence is to attack the bidder. Here again Forté is going to find it hard going. Unless there is an Achilles' heel we do not know about, Forté is not going to be able to fault Granada on financial performance. In accounting terms, too, the company looks squeaky-clean.

The commercial logic of the deal is easier ground but again the core Forté businesses of roadside catering and inexpensive overnight accommodation fit neatly into the Granada group. Sir Rocco may yet surprise us but at this stage it looks bad for him. A little bit more on the offer price and Granada is home and dry.

Mixed economy: Hopeful signals for mortgage lenders, but an improvement in Britain's trade balance is expected to prove short-lived

Housing market shows first signs of revival

DIANE COYLE
Economics Correspondent

Mortgage lenders yesterday reported what they saw as the first positive signs in the housing market for many months. House prices jumped 1.5 per cent in November, their biggest monthly rise for more than a year, according to Nationwide Building Society. Halifax's price index, due out on Monday, is expected to continue its recent pattern of modest monthly increases.

The news on prices was supported by separate Bank of England figures showing a significant rise in the number of new mortgages approved in October.

Adrian Coles, director-general of the Council of Mortgage Lenders, said: "The housing

market is not yet out of the woods of recession, but there are some positive signs." The cuts in mortgage rates announced earlier this week would help confidence, he said.

Philip Williamson, a Nationwide spokesman, said the ab-

sence of any Budget measures for housing was disappointing, but there was evidence of a firmer trend since the summer. Halifax believes the market has stabilised and should recover next year.

Without any special Budget measures for housing, the fortunes of mortgage lenders rest on a recovery. But hopes rose yesterday that Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, might be able to deliver another fall in the cost of home loans by reducing base rates at the next opportunity.

The FT-SE 100 index closed at a new high, up just over 16 points at 3,680.4.

Evidence that manufacturing industry is in decline for the first time in three years boosted hopes of a base rate reduction. Separate figures showing a record rise in consumer credit

in October did nothing to dampen them.

The November survey of purchasing managers in manufacturing showed a drop in the activity index below 50, the threshold between expansion and contraction.

Output, one of five components of the index, edged up last month. But new orders fell sharply. The price index fell to its lowest level since August 1992, suggesting that cost pressures are no longer an issue in manufacturing.

Stocks of raw materials fell in response to weaker demand. However, stocks of finished goods rose slightly as production exceeded sales. Helen MacFarlane, an economist at the City brokers Hoare, Govett, said: "It is clear that stocks have increased to uncomfortable lev-

els." Most City economists expect official figures for manufacturing output in October, on Wednesday, to remain weak after a drop in September.

News of a record increase of £872m in consumer credit in October did not affect the City



Moving index: Trade deficit on cars worsened to £1.2bn

Exports reach a record high

PAUL WALLACE
Economics Editor

Britain's trade deficit fell by £300m to £1bn in September as the volume and value of exports reached a record high. But City analysts warned that the improvement in the trade balance would prove short-lived.

Although Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, welcomed the performance of exporters, official statisticians said the latest estimates of trends in both volume and value pointed to a continuing deterioration in the trade balance.

"The October global data will probably show the improvement in the deficit more than reversed," warned Adam Cole, economist at James Capel.

The latest figures, incorporating new information about the balance of trade with the rest of the European Union, showed that rising imports from

the rest of the world were responsible for the trend deterioration in the deficit.

Comparing the three months ending in September with the previous three, the underlying volume of exports - excluding oil and erratics - rose by just over 3 per cent to both the EU and the rest of the world. However, imports rose by 5 per cent from outside the EU but only 2.7 per cent from within the EU.

The trade deficit of £300m with the EU in September was unchanged on August. However, it fell by £500m in the third quarter compared with the second. It would have improved even more without a surge in imports of cars. This caused the deficit on cars to worsen by more than £300m to £1.2bn in the third quarter. The price of exports to the EU rose much more sharply than those to the rest of the world.

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

Edited by TOM STEVENSON

Work to do at Wolverhampton

These were record profits from Wolverhampton & Dudley, but strip out property profits and the rate of increase, 7 per cent to £40.2m, is unlikely to set pulses racing. True, margins recovered nicely in the second half so that for the full year they matched last year's 18.4 per cent, but the underlying problems facing the West Midlands brewer remain.

With market shares of only 6 per cent in the Banks's region and 4 per cent in the North-east, where the recent acquisition, Camerons, is located, there is plainly plenty to go for in terms of organic growth within Wolves's existing areas. But the flip side of that niche position is that the company finds itself uncomfortably squeezed between its higher rivals such as Bass and Courage still slugging it out for market dominance.

That is a problem in Wolves's core region because profit margins in the West Midlands are the lowest in the country, with beer selling for less than 120p a pint, much cheaper than anywhere else. In an increasingly competitive environment, changing perceptions of how much a pint should sell for and persuading rivals to follow you up is a non-starter. That means volumes are the key and hence the company has done better than average in tenanted pubs but it is little consolation when that outperformance means a fall of 3.2 per cent compared with 4.2 per cent for the market.

Only in the more food-oriented destination pubs and restaurants and taverns have like-for-like wet sales improved much, underlining the importance of food in driving beer sales, and Wolves does not yet have enough pubs providing meals.

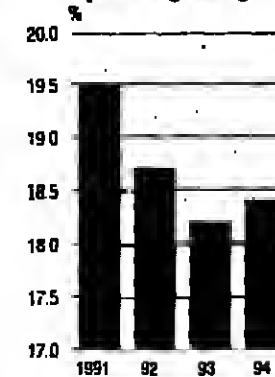
Another persistent problem is that Camerons, the North-east brewery acquired a couple of years back, is op-

Wolves & Dudley: at a glance

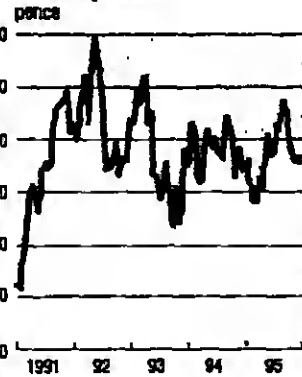
Market value: £369m, share price 561p

Trading record	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Turnover (£m)	18.8	210	224	231	237
Pre-tax profits (£m)	33.0	35.2	36.5	38.3	43.5
Earnings per share (pence)	35.5	37.2	37.2	38.5	46.8
Dividends per share (pence)	10.3	11.4	12.6	13.9	15.3

Operating margin



Share price



erating well below capacity and will lose out to its bigger rival on that patch. Vaux, unless it can acquire more houses in the area to tie into its beer sales.

All that said, Wolves is a soundly run business and the 10 per cent increase in the dividend to 15.3p confirmed its progressive dividend policy after the disappointment of the rate of growth in the payout at the half-way stage of only about 5 per cent. After yesterday's 21p rise to 551p, the shares stand on a prospective price/earnings ratio of about 15. With little yield support that is high enough.

Strategic visions at Chrysalis

Chris Wright's Chrysalis is at a crucial point in its transformation from a music and television production company to an integrated media group. Given the lack of underlying operating profits in the past year, and the likelihood of at least one more year in the red, it is virtually impossible to predict how the stock will perform. The real questions are strategic and managerial.

Is the company right to move away from television facilities and aggressively into radio and film? Can it sustain the start-up costs of two new radio stations let alone finance bids for up to four new regional licences in the next year? And can the film business, where earnings can take years to generate, add value to Chrysalis's business mix?

The view in the City remains somewhat mixed, and certainly the results for the year to August gave conflicting signals. The television business is profitable, with a mix of independent production companies supplying programming to a range of UK broadcasters. Equally, the export market continues to be strong, representing £28m of the company's £37.7m turnover.

Music publishing is also performing well, but profits have been dragged down by the costs of developing Echo Records, the company's own label.

Overall, pre-tax profits topped £1m in the year to August, helped by £11.5m in extraordinary gains. Radio has been a source of big costs: £1.5m spent on the launch of the London Heart franchise alone. But radio is arguably the best strategic new road Chrysalis has ever taken. Radio's share of advertising has doubled to about 4 per cent in the past year, and the market is expected to grow by 15 per cent this year.

There are more doubts on the feature film side, but Chrysalis is in any event taking a very cautious approach. It is clearly intent on retaining its strong TV production franchise, and continuing to develop its library of music and television rights, even if it might take a bit of a flyer on film.

While future profits are hard to gauge, the current share price of 170p, down 2p on yesterday's results, looks quite attractive for those who believe in the strategic vision.

IN BRIEF

Management buys Blue Boar

The Blue Boar group of motorway service stations has been sold to its management for £25m. The deal involves three sites, including two on the M1 at Watford Gap and Rotherham near Northampton. A third is located at Annadale Water on the M74 in Scotland. The deal was led by Blue Boar's managing director, Dennis Watson, and backed by 31, the venture capital group.

Unilever takes on Glaxo arm

Unilever, the Anglo-Dutch consumer products group, is paying £95m for the Glaxo subsidiary,

Hazeline. Hazeline is a Singapore-based consumer products group which manufactures a range of skin-care products in North and South-east Asia. Last year the division reported operating profits of £4.1m on sales of £32.5m.

Buy-in for Marilyn Foods

Marilyn Foods, the frozen food retailer, has been sold to a management buy-in for an undisclosed amount. Marilyn Foods sells gourmet frozen food products from 14 regional depots and reported sales of £16m last year. The buy-in is being led by the former director of Northern Foods, Jack Slatyer.

NOTICE TO INVESTORS

National & Provincial Building Society hereby gives notice that the annual rates of interest payable on the following accounts, with effect from 2 December 1995, will be as indicated below:

Name of Account	Minimum Balance	Gross Interest Rate*	Net Interest Rate**
Instant Reserve	1	1.00	0.75
Under 16s receive	250	1.25	0.93
£500 rate for	500	3.35	2.51
£1 to £500	2,500	3.50	2.62
	5,000	3.75	2.81
	10,000	4.25	3.18
	25,000	4.60	3.45
Private Reserve	500	4.00	3.00
Annual Interest	5,000	4.15	3.11
	10,000	4.85	3.63
	25,000	5.40	4.05
	50,000	5.75	4.31
	100,000	5.85	4.38
Private Reserve	500	3.93	2.94
Monthly Income	5,000	4.08	3.06
	10,000	4.75	3.56
	25,000	5.28	3.96
	50,000	5.61	4.20
	100,000	5.70	4.27
Investment Reserve	5,000	5.50	4.12
Annual Interest†	10,000	5.90	4.42
	25,000	6.20	4.65
	50,000	6.45	4.83
	100,000	6.75	5.06
Investment Reserve	5,000	5.43	4.07
Monthly Income†	10,000	5.82	4.36
	25,000	6.11	4.58
	50,000	6.35	4.76
	100,000	6.63	4.97
TESSA***	1	6.00	N/A
Annual Interest	Max Investment	6.50	N/A
TESSA***	1	5.85	N/A
Monthly Income			
M.A.X.	1	1.00	0.75
Treasurer's Reserve	1	1.75	1.31
	500	3.70	2.77
	5,000	3.95	2.96
	10,000	4.70	3.52
	25,000	5.20	3.90

*The gross interest rate shown is the rate payable without taking account of the deduction of income tax. **The net interest rate shown represents the gross interest rate after the deduction of income tax at the basic rate (currently 19%). ***Interest on TESSA accounts is exempt from income tax provided the TESSA conditions are met. †Gross interest rates quoted for Investment Reserve include 1.50% gross extra interest payable on 1 June each year (on the first of each month for monthly income option) provided that withdrawal conditions are met and balance remains over £5,000.

All other variable rate accounts not specifically mentioned in this notice remain unchanged.

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Takeover talk and rate hopes produce another record

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3963.7 +4.6
FT-SE 350
1821.5 +06.7
SEAQ VOLUME
863.5m shares, 31,037 bargains
Gifts Index
95.65 +0.23

share price, pence

Month	Share Price (pence)
FEB	900
MAR	1040
APR	900
MAY	920
JUN	940
JUL	920
AUG	900
SEP	920
OCT	900
NOV	640

De La Rue

Source: Sharestream

Another day, another record. Inspired by takeover and merger interest rate hopes, leading shares ended a remarkable week in ebullient form with the FTSE 100 index up 16.1 points at 3,680.4. Except for a modest relapse on Budget day the index has made steady progress this week, gaining 56.4 points.

But the stock market is not quite such a happy place as the rip roaring index performance might suggest. Said one stockbroker: "98 per cent of this market is doing absolutely nothing; the other 2 per cent is going ballistic".


Certainly blue chips need interest rate cuts and at least one big takeover bid for support. The rates reduction should come soon and, if the rumour of a mill in form, the bid action should be seen in the next week.

GRE, the Guardian Royal Exchange insurance group, reasserted its position as the market's favourite victim.

The shares outperformed other blue chips, achieving a 22p gain to 29p in unusually buoyant BAT Industries, facing increasing tobacco problems in the US, is regarded as the most likely to strike. The insurance group is seen as a ideal add-on to BAT's already extensive financial interests which include the Eagle Star insurance business. BAT shares were unchanged at 557.5p.

But a BAT strike is not the only story circulating. A defensive merger with Legal & General, also a rumored target, is another continuing yarn; so is a get-together with the market's leading bank bid candidate, Standard Chartered. Suggestions the long rumored Continental insurance bid is at least about to materialise lifted Royal up 17p to 400p and General Accident 18p to 683p.

L&G was little changed at



MAR
DEF
Stock

694p. Standard, in a strong bank sector, rose a further 5p to 614p.

Other takeover favourites bounced higher, including Bank of Scotland, Royal Bank of Scotland and Asda, the supermarket chain.

Vickers, the engineering group embracing Rolls-Royce cars, was another in the bid frame with talk of a Continental strike creating the action. The shares purred 7p to 278p.

The biotech babes were again high on drugs. British Biotech, on its cancer drug, was traded at 2.67p overnight and touched 2.10p in morning trading on hopes of US funding.

STOCK MARKET REPORT

EK PAIN

market reporter
of the year

But the Americans failed to arrive and the shares closed at 1,675p, up 127p. There are expectations the group will produce reports on another drug during the weekend.

Proton, the drug designer, rose 35p to 144p, as it announced the first of its signaled deals, an income-producing licence agreement with Smith-Kline Beecham. Celltech, rose 53p to 602p and newcomer Peptide Therapeutics put on a further 13p to 251p.

MAID, the on-line information group which has just achieved a US listing, headed the big rise.

39p to 274p as it put its 100 million pages of business information on to the Internet.

CMG, a computer software group, made a bright start placed at 290p, the share reached 339p.

But it was out all one way traffic. BSkyB was at one time up 77p as buyers chased shares in a narrow market. The banked on US buying following the company's inclusion to the internationally followed Morgan Stanley Capital Index and further support from the European Commission.

But then the Office of Fair Trading intervened, deciding to review the satellite television group's sports coverage, presumably sparked off by their Endsleigh deal, and its relationship with cable channels.

In often frantic trading the shares slumped 51p and then staged a modest rally, closing 55p down at 428.5p.

other casualty, crashing 21p to 35p. The shares were 119p earlier this year. CI had has to tie up new loan terms with its bankers and is preparing rights issue, said to be around 10p.

De La Rine, the paper and security printing group, tumbled a further 17p to 643p. The shares have crashed from a high of 1,052p this year. The group issued another profit warning this week and analysts are continuing to make negative noises.

Banston is another to lose appeal. Its latest results prompted a round of downgrading, lowering the shares 10.5p to 185p, lowest for three years.

Pearson jumped 33p to 682p with a brace of big buyers appearing towards the close, and Grand Metropolitan slipped 3p to 439p. Its ESOP sold 51.5 million shares to SBC Warburg, which, with Cazenove, placed 8 million of its own shares at 4.8 million.

BTG, the old British Technology Group, gained 15p to a 763p peak as, in the head of drug fever, the market continued to speculate about its riches, largely represented an array of patents, licence and new products. The shares were floated at 225p in the summer.

In the stories circulating is that BTG has clinched a licensing deal with Zeneca. It is said that the drugs giant, which yesterday launched its Diprivan intravenous anaesthetic in Japan is taking on the marketing for a BTG cancer drug that due to be put on sale next month.

Wrensum Co, a maker of men's clothing, jumped 19p to 143p on takeover gossip. The shares have climbed 37p this week, from a year's low of 97p. Interim figures are due.

as
minc

**Stock market reporter
of the year**



SHARE PRICE DATA

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.

Other details: *x* Ex rights; *Ex-dividend*; *Ex-all* = Unlisted Securities Market
Suspended on *Portly* *Print* on *NIL* *Paid* *Share*

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FTSE 100 - Real-time	00	Sterling Rates	04	Privatisation Issues	36
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UK Company News	02	Walt St Report	20	Electricity Shares	40
Foreign Exchange	03	Tobacco Market	21	High Street Banks	41

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Stock	Vol/98	Stock	Vol/98	Stock	Vol/98	Stock	Vol/98
General Mills	75,000	Worthington	15,000	Wynn-Duncan	8,000	FTI	6,200
Willys	34,000	Lambert	14,000	SP	7,000	Granada	5,000
Worthington	15,000	Robt Corp	12,000	FTI	8,000	Granada	5,000
Lambert	14,000	Robt Corp	12,000	British Airways	7,200	British Airways	5,100
Robt Corp	12,000	SP Transport	8,000	ARDA Energy	7,200	Coalition	4,800

FT-SE 100 INDEX HOUR BY HOUR			
Open 3954.0 down 10.3	11.00 3972.6 up 8.3	14.00 3977.0 up 12.7	
10.00 3980.2 down 11.1	12.00 3973.3 up 14.0	15.00 3972.5 up 8.2	
10.00 3971.2 up 6.9	13.00 3974.1 up 13.9	Close 3980.4 up 16.1	

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GOVERNMENT SECURITIES

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Osborne to cash in on jockey scarcity

Racing

RICHARD EDMONDSON

It has long been a part of the fabric on the flat, but jockey power arrived in earnest for the boys of the muddy season this week. Long-term injuries to Norman Williams and Adrian Maguire have not only gnawed away at the number of top-shelf riders, they have also freed battalions of runners from leading trainers Kim Bailey and David Nicholson on Monday.

This has meant good news for the jockeys' room and, not least

of all, Richard Dunwoody, Jamie Osborne and Graham Bradley, the leading men at the reins who have been mopping up the reservoir of spare riders. All three have risen above the station of forelock-tugging this week as gangs of trainers approached them for their services. The single figure who has thumbed his nose most blatantly at the jockey shortage has been Graham Bradley, who had tea and a crumpie on Monday with David Nicholson on Monday, but later the same day told the trainer he would not need the trainer's hand to lever his boot into the saddle at the

weekend. (It is not reported whether Nicholson wanted to put his own boot after this event.)

It takes a brave man to cross the champion trainer, and Osborne clearly sees a long-term association with the animal he does ride this afternoon, Master Oats. The Gold Cup winner's regular jockey, Williamson, is out after a fall at Sedgemoor which was accompanied by the sort of obvious pain normally noted in the graphics of a Batman fight sequence.

While the Irishman waits for a mangled right leg to heal, Osborne will ride up to, and possibly including, next year's Festival. His first appointment with the nine-year-old looks a tricky one. In Chepstow's Rehearsal Chase, Master Oats has to give 12lb to Bradbury Star and two stones to Katabatic, and there are not many motor cars who can do that.

Nevertheless, Master Oats (2.05) may be up to it. According to Kim Bailey, the chestnut's best run last year, considering the weight and ground conditions, was the only one he did not win.

his final effort in the Grand National. The exciting deduction he has drawn is that the Gold Cup winner may still be improving.

At Sandown, Osborne's reject, Viking Flagship, will not have to have improved to win the Tingle Creek Chase. But whether the two-mile fencing champion is a race fit enough for the job is a different matter. If he falls any way short of peak condition, there will be an opening for the impressive Ascot winner Sound Man (2.00), the Irish-trained mount of Dunwoody.

What should have been another informative race, the Hattons Grace Hurdle at Fairyhouse tomorrow, has been neutered by the withdrawal of Monticello. The only horse to have won consecutive races at the Festival (he captured the first event, the bumper, in 1992 and the Supreme Novice Hurdle, which opened the following year's meeting), Pat Flynn's gelding has spent much of the last three seasons in the doctor's waiting room. He has brought with him just about every prob-

lem he has having a saucerpan jammed over his head and now misses a hill-stickered encounter with Michael Hourigan's Dorcas Pride.

Monticello had a slightly runny nose and I had him stopped before declaration time and they found a little mucus in his lungs," Flynn reported. "I'm disappointed as he was in superb shape, but if he can't make it he can't make it. The only races that matter are the Irish and English Champion Hurdles and if he had to go for them without a run it wouldn't bother me."

While Monticello may be used sparingly the same has not been true of Lonsome Train, who clocks up his 1,000th ride of the year at Wolverhampton this afternoon.

The Italian reaches the landmark on Caples (3.25) in a mould-breaking event for Britain. The Wulfrun Stakes at Dunstall Park is the first Listed race to be run on the all-weather in this country and has attracted an uncommonly useful field for the man-made surface. Perhaps they are getting in practice for the 1996 Breeders' Cup.

Lonesome has friends

Lonesome Glory is to be aimed at the Gold Cup at Cheltenham in March after humbling three rivals on his British debut at Sandown yesterday.

The top American steeple-chaser forged clear of Egypt Mill Prince on the run-in, beating Jenny Pitman's runner by 11 lengths with King Credo third and the former two-mile champion, Remittance Man, fourth.

The seven-year-old jumped Sandown's stiff fences in style for his regular rider, Blythe Miller, the woman jockey who is the reigning U.S. champion. Lonesome Glory's new trainer, Charlie Brooks, said that the horse would be entered for the Gold Cup (40-1) with William Hill, though a different target at the Festival has not been ruled out.

WILLIAM HILL HANDICAP 10-YEAR-OLD

1996	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20

CHEPSTOW
1.00: GREENHILL TARE AWAY showed considerable improvement when 8lb out of the handicap over hurdles at Cheltenham when beating Gillan Cove and the fabled Morgans Harbour. Philip Hobbs has always thought a lot of this horse, who has beat Mad Thyme, whose opening run this season ended at the first fence.
1.30: Lady was a weak race at Ascot a fortnight ago and the cramped odds on offer mean value can be found elsewhere. One who may go well is Josh Gifford's

FRENCH CHARMER, who has a two-year absence to defy but was a good chaser two years ago.
2.00: Kim Bailey picks the same race as last year for MASTER OATS to start his campaign but reports his Gold Cup winner forward this time around. He was successful in 1994 and has scored off all but three times, so there is no reason to oppose him today. At his best, Bradbury Star would be a threat, especially in receipt of 12lb, but the 10-year-old is unlikely to return to form on ground softer than he likes.

HYPERION
2.00: Sound Man will have plenty of supporters after his emphatic win at Ascot last month, but none of his opponents were suited by the conditions there. The Irish rider is not guaranteed to be as effective back

at the minimum trip. He faces a different calibre of opponent in Travado, back to his best this autumn, and VIKING FLAGSHIP. The dual two-mile champion defeated Nick Henderson's charge in this event last season and has never been beaten at level weights over fences.
2.30: Captain Kheir put up an improved record of jumping to win a good novice event at Cheltenham and those behind have franked the form since. But his chasing progress has been far from smooth, while INCHALLACH seemed to take

instinct to the larger obstacles when beating Certainly Strong (head on some terms today). Simple Arithmetic may need softer ground.
3.10: Blazey has been raised 16lb for an easy Aintree win and will find it harder carrying top weight in this month's competitive field.
3.40: NOVA RUN, a 20-length winner on his hurdling debut, could be leniently handicapped in a weak race.

HYPERION
1.00 French Chamer 2.40 Manolete
1.30 Greenhill Tare Away 3.10 Felling Countryman
2.05 Master Oats 3.45 Freddie Lustre
GOING: Good - Good to Firm in places; Harder - Good (back straight - Good to Firm in places).
Right-hand course, where leading fences along back straight; run-in of 900yd.
Breeders' Cup in 4.00, four miles south of Epsom. Ruler railway station (service from London, Waterloo) within 10 minutes. Admission: Club £15, Junior Club £16, 10yrns £10; Grandstand & Paddock £12; Silver Ring £5; CAR PARK: free, or £2 to members.
SIS
LEADING TRAINERS: M. Pipe - 53 winners from 201 runners given a success ratio of 26.4% and a fee to a £1.10 level scale of £14.10; N. Twiston-Davies - 18 winners, 10 runners, 50.7%, 4.01 lb; P. J. Hobbs - 11 winners, 60 runners, 20.0%, 4.10 lb; O. Nicholson - 11 winners, 60 runners, 25.0%, 4.01 lb.
LEADING JOCKEYS: R. Dunwoody - 27 winners, 11 rides, 24.1%, 4.26 lb; A. Maguire - 10 winners, 30 rides, 17.8%, 4.12 lb; A. Maguire - 10 winners, 30 rides, 17.8%, 4.12 lb; G. Bradley - 10 winners, 30 rides, 17.8%, 4.12 lb.
WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: None.
LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: New train (1,400) has been sent 187 miles by G. Sallings from Scamptown, Lancs.

WOLVERHAMPTON
2.55: RIVER KEEN was over 10 lengths on Lingfield's and last time today's distance is longer but this strong galloper can still hold off a likely late run by Mistlight.
3.25: Tarawa and Vertan have shown talent over shorter trips on turf but should have no problem staying this distance on good ground. Caples, however, could well need further to show his best. At longer odds, MARALINGA has each-way appeal, having won over 10 furlongs on Lingfield's all-weather track in April.

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WETHERBY
HYPERION
1.20: Chappell Curlew 1.10 Wind Force (nb)
1.40: Glimmer 2.10 Spanish Light 2.40 Ungilded Missile 3.15 Smafor
GOING: Good.
Right-hand course, main of 300yd slightly uphill.
Breeders' Cup in 4.00, four miles south of Epsom. Ruler railway station (service from London, Waterloo) within 10 minutes. Admission: Club £15, Junior Club £16, 10yrns £10; Grandstand & Paddock £12; Silver Ring £5; CAR PARK: free, or £2 to members.
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TOWCESTER
HYPERION
1.25: Fennel 1.25: Stars 1.25: Lake of Loughrea 1.55: Crane 1.55: Mair 3.05: Silver Standard 3.35: Carole's Crusader
GOING: Good to firm.
Right-hand course, main of 300yd slightly uphill.
Breeders' Cup in 4.00, four miles south of Epsom. Ruler railway station (service from London, Waterloo) within 10 minutes. Admission: Club £15, Junior Club £16, 10yrns £10; Grandstand & Paddock £12; Silver Ring £5; CAR PARK: free, or £2 to members.
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SANDOWN

12.50 Smith's Band
1.25 Naltheon Lad
2.00 Viking Flagship

GOING: Good - Good (Good to Firm in places); Harder - Good (back straight - Good to Firm in places).
Right-hand course, where leading fences along back straight; run-in of 900yd.
Breeders' Cup in 4.00, four miles south of Epsom. Ruler railway station (service from London, Waterloo) within 10 minutes. Admission: Club £15, Junior Club £16, 10yrns £10; Grandstand & Paddock £12; Silver Ring £5; CAR PARK: free, or £2 to members.

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SANDOWN
2.00: Sound Man will have plenty of supporters after his emphatic win at Ascot last month, but none of his opponents were suited by the conditions there. The Irish rider is not guaranteed to be as effective back

at the minimum trip. He faces a different calibre of opponent in Travado, back to his best this autumn, and VIKING FLAGSHIP. The dual two-mile champion defeated Nick Henderson's charge in this event last season and has never been beaten at level weights over fences.
2.30: Captain Kheir put up an improved record of jumping to win a good novice event at Cheltenham and those behind have franked the form since. But his chasing progress has been far from smooth, while INCHALLACH seemed to take

instinct to the larger obstacles when beating Certainly Strong (head on some terms today). Simple Arithmetic may need softer ground.
3.10: Blazey has been raised 16lb for an easy Aintree win and will find it harder carrying top weight in this month's competitive field.
3.40: NOVA RUN, a 20-length winner on his hurdling debut, could be leniently handicapped in a weak race.

SANDOWN

12.50 Smith's Band
1.25 Naltheon Lad
2.00 Viking Flagship

GOING: Good - Good (Good to Firm in places); Harder - Good (back straight - Good to Firm in places).
Right-hand course, where leading fences along back straight; run-in of 900yd.
Breeders' Cup in 4.00, four miles south of Epsom. Ruler railway station (service from London, Waterloo) within 10 minutes. Admission: Club £15, Junior Club £16, 10yrns £10; Grandstand & Paddock £12; Silver Ring £5; CAR PARK: free, or £2 to members.

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sport

Bonetti discovers paradise after Juventus

Glenn Moore talks to an Italian import sampling life in glamorous Grimsby

There he was, the Serie A star, a man who had played in a European Cup final and shared a dressing room with Michel Platini, Paolo Rossi and Gianluca Vialli. Now he was getting changed in the laundry room at Blundell Park, home of the not-quite-so-world famous Grimsby Town.

Ten years ago, Ivano Bonetti played for Juventus against the South American club champions in the Intercontinental Cup in Japan. Today he plays for Grimsby against Charlton Athletic in the End-Sleigh League First Division in Cleethorpes. The shirt is still black and white stripes, but that is where the resemblance ends.

Juventus, 23 times Italian champions, were the first club to win all three European competitions. Grimsby, who last played in the top flight 47 years ago and never won it, do not even send much of a fishing fleet into Europe these days.

Bonetti's presence at Grimsby is remarkable in itself. What makes it barely believable is that he is paying £50,000 of his own money for the privilege.

Talking to Bonetti yesterday, as he cheerfully pulled his training kit on amid the washing machines and tumble dryers, one had to ask him: where did it all go wrong? The answer, delivered with the aid of his interpreter and cousin, Dario Magri, is that nothing has gone wrong. He loves it in Grimsby, so much so he has turned down the chance of a lucrative move to Japan.

Such is his desire to play he turns out today despite being thrown through the windscreen in a head-on car crash while visiting Italy in midweek. "He was so lucky," Magri said. "The cars were written off." Incredibly Bonetti suffered only mild cuts and bruising to his forehead.

Bonetti's affection for Grimsby is reciprocated. Blundell Park will be sold out today for a match which would normally attract 4,500. Instead they were queuing on Monday to be among the 8,500 capacity crowd. Five hundred of those supporters, judging by this week's sales, will be waving an Italian flag, a similar number will be wearing shirts with "Bonetti" on the back. "It is incredible for me,"



Ivano Bonetti, the former Genoa, Juventus, Sampdoria and Torino player, makes himself at home in the Grimsby Town laundry room

Photograph: Simon Wilkinson

Bonetti said. "For 15 years in Italy I played alongside big-name foreign players, now I find I am the big-name foreigner in a town which did not know I existed two months ago."

"It is a special situation here. I am abroad and doing well for a team which has not done anything for a long time. At 31, I am still achieving something. There are goals to pursue here just as there were at Juventus. They are simply smaller goals."

"It is lucky we are living outside Grimsby," Magri said. "Yes, they are going nuts about me in town," Bonetti added. "It is 'Ivanomania', said Steve Flowers, the editor of the Grimsby fanzine, *Sing When We're Fighting*. "He has galvanised the place. It is like love. Suddenly you see him for someone and you are sitting in a room looking a hunch

of flowers. Supporters are turning up in Italian mafia-style suits, they are carrying Italian flags. It's wonderful."

It helps that Bonetti is a charmer, as a player and a person. On arrival at Blundell Park, the first person he went to was Dot, the late-middle-aged laundry lady, kissing her on both cheeks. He smiled constantly, was evidently popular with the managerial team of Brian Laws and Kenny Swain, and with his team-mates.

After he scored the winner against West Bromwich a fortnight ago, Flowers said: "He did a lap of honour. He blew kisses to each stand in turn and hugged his translator, all this while the ref is waiting to restart the game. At the end he did another lap of honour with all the mascots bowing

and scraping the ground around him."

On the pitch he is a mercur-

the assistant manager. "He is technically good; confident with the ball at his feet and

'It is a special situation here. At 31 I am still achieving something. There are goals to pursue here just as there were at Juventus. They are simply smaller goals'

player. "He is unpredictable," Flowers said. "He drifts in and out of the game a bit, and plays all over the place. Laws has done well, he had the bottle to play him, and he has the gumption to let him do what he wants."

"He has qualities you rarely see in this league," said Swain, composed. He puts in quality crosses and is dangerous when he runs at people."

For his part, Bonetti is enjoying the contrast with calcio. "English football is tough, but honest," he said. "It is very fast and there is little time to think, partly because the referee nev-

er stops the game. Grimsby play good football, not long-ball, there is a lot of first-time passing. Italian football has a lot of skill and technique, but it can be too slow. It also lacks honesty, there are many tricks."

Bonetti's CV reads like a *Serie A* feature list. After beginning with his home town, Brescia, he joined Genoa, then Juventus. The then 20-year-old found it difficult to gain a regular place - "I was competing with Platini for the same position," he said ruefully - and moved to Atlanta. From there he went to Bologna, then Sampdoria, with whom he played in the 1992 European Cup final against Barcelona at Wembley. Last year he played alongside Andrea Silenzi, now of Nottingham Forest, at Torino. He then decided he wanted to play abroad, probably Japan,

where he knew Kazu Miura, formerly of Genoa. Torino agreed to release him from his contract on condition he did not go to another Italian club and the rights to his "services and image" were sold to an American management company. While waiting to go to Japan in January, he thought he would try his luck in England.

Swain takes up the story. "Brian and I were looking for a left-sided attacking midfielder and we went to see one in a reserve match at Aston Villa. While there I met an Italian I knew from my Villa days who said they had just such a player looking for a club."

"Ivano came up to play in a reserve game, Brian put it about the press, and we had 2,000 turn up. I thought, 'We're on to something here'."

Bonetti's arrival galvanised the team to such effect that they have moved into third place. However, there was a snag. The company owning Bonetti wanted to be paid for his hire, Grimsby are not flush with money and, even if they were, under FFA regulations they were not allowed to deal with the company.

Last week, Swain brokered a deal. Bonetti, eager to stay, put up £50,000 and Grimsby promised they could persuade the community to match it. If the Ivano Bonetti Fund raises the money by the end of this month, his loan will be secured for the rest of the season. After that, no one knows. To buy him permanently would cost £250,000, money Grimsby do not have. But if the unthinkable happened, and they won promotion, surely they would find the cash somewhere.

It is not inconceivable: Bonetti is not the only good player. Young defenders Gary Croft and Peter Handyside are regularly watched by Premiership scouts. White Jamie Forrester, once of Leeds and Arsenal, is reviving his career in attack. Alongside him is Steve Livingstone, formerly of Chelsea, Blackburn and Coventry and, at £140,000, Grimsby's record buy. "When I came here I said I was not prepared to sit in the middle of the division," Laws said. "We are looking to go up. If we did, the TV money is worth £5-7m, which gives us a chance of having a go at staying there."

And if they did go up, could Bonetti persuade his former Sampdoria team-mate and good friend Vialli to join him?

"He loves English football and he loves the idea of coming to play in England," Bonetti said. "But a lot depends on the Champions' League. His contract ends this year and if Juventus win that, he may get some very good offers."

Would Vialli also be prepared to pay his own money to play in England? The suggestion brings much laughter from Bonetti and Magri before Bonetti said: "For sure - it would not be so much of an effort for him to do so."

Newspapers are screaming. But in Grimsby, they are fantasising already. Last week a regular drive from Lancaster only to find she could not get in, Flowers said. "Two to three thousand were turned away. This is unheard of at Grimsby. I am just enjoying it while it lasts."

Rangers rely on youth

Scottish football

Rangers can recall a glittering array of talent to play alongside Paul Gascoigne for tomorrow's visit to Hearts, yet the 18-year-old Brian McGinlay may still retain his place in midfield.

McGinlay made his first appearance of the season in last Saturday's 4-1 win over Hibernian at Easter Road and, despite squad recalls for Brian Laudrup, Stuart McCall and David Robertson, McGinlay may yet make the starting line-up.

"It is the second leg of a difficult away double for us but we want to carry on where we left off at Easter Road," Walter Smith, their manager, said.

Kilmarnock's Gary Holt, who spent a frustrating time kicking his heels at Parkhead after being signed by the then manager Lou Macari, returns there today hoping to haunt Celtic.

Holt was prevented from playing a competitive game for Celtic for a year after signing by an SFA ruling, because he had bought himself out of the army. "Gary has impressed me in recent reserve games, so he is in the team to play Celtic," his manager, Alex Totten, said.

Celtic trail Rangers by four points and their manager, Tommy Burns, facing his mid club, is looking to maintain the form shown in last week's impressive 3-1 home win over Hearts.

Motherwell's recent run is reaching crisis point as they take on the injury-hit Hibernian at Fir Park without a win in their last seven league games.

Partick will be without the injured goalkeeper, Nicky Walker, when they face the Coca-Cola Cup winners Aberdeen, complete with new signing Dean Windass, at Firhill. Scott Booth and Theo Snelders will not travel with Roy Aitken's squad.

Raith go to Falkirk with Jimmy Nicholl, Premier Division manager of the month, adding the Bristol City full-back Mark Humphries to his squad. But Nicholl has failed in an attempt to sign the Bosnian striker Dino Vukotic, with Raith being refused a work permit because his international record does not measure up.

Aberdeen win the race to sign Windass

GUY HODGSON

Fresh from becoming the first British team to qualify for Europe next season, Aberdeen, last weekend's Scottish Coca-Cola Cup winners, ripped in ahead of Everton and Norwich City yesterday to sign Hull City's striker, Dean Windass, for £700,000. A previous cross-border raid by the Dons took the Oldham midfielder Paul Bernard to Pittodrie for £1m.

Windass, 26, has scored eight goals this season for Hull, the Second Division's bottom team, but the club's financial problems, which have threatened their existence, forced them to sell.

Non-League North Ferriby United are also richer for the deal. Windass joined Hull from the Northern Counties East Premier Division side with a sell-on clause of 10 per cent.

Wolves, who are looking for a replacement for Graham Taylor, yesterday said they had been refused permission to speak to Leicester's Mark McGhee. However, the Leicester chairman, Martin George, denied there had been any

move, much to the surprise of Tom Finn, the Wolves secretary. "Mr Jonathan Hayward, our chairman, reported to me last night that he had just spoken to Mr George to request permission to speak to Mark McGhee and had been refused," Finn said.

The takeover of Sheffield United is not cut and dried after all. A club statement said that negotiations between the potential buyers, Mike McDonald and Martyn Burke, and the controlling share holder, Reg Brealey, had stalled.

Colin Cooper, the Nottingham Forest defender, escaped with a censure and a warning about his future conduct from the Football Association for a rude gesture at The Dell on the opening day of the season.

Bolton's hopes of signing Newcastle's Scott Sellers for £800,000 in time for today's Premiership match with Nottingham Forest have been dashed. They have yet to settle personal terms. Manchester United yesterday blocked a move demanding price cuts next season by telling shareholders at their AGM that there would be a review of the club's admission costs in the spring.

Kinnear dreams of repeating Newcastle's title tumble

Phil Shaw looks at the portents in this weekend's Premiership programme

scars which festered until the spring. Hence the Geordie joy, tempered with relief, that Kevin Keegan's team held their nerve during November this time.

Joe Kinnear, the Dons' manager, would have been entitled to a wry smile at the way Liverpool sought to probe Newcastle's alleged lack of pace in central defence with Wimbledon-style long balls over the top in Wednesday's Coca-Cola Cup tie. He also knows only too well that the covering speed of Warren Barton, whom he sold to Keegan in the summer, is as good an insurance against such a threat as money can buy.

Even if the occasion tricks Vinnie Jones and Co into rekindling the Crazy Gang spirit, it may not be enough to stop a side bursting with confidence after 12 wins and two draws since their slump at Southampton. Manchester United can close the gap to two points by beat-

ing Chelsea today. In terms of the clubs' relative standings, not to mention United's recent 4-1 win at Stamford Bridge, it looks a formality. However, several factors make Alex Ferguson wary, not least Chelsea's remarkable record of just two defeats in their last 20 trips to Old Trafford.

The absence of Peter Schmeichel, which means a first Premiership start for Kevin Pilkington, may also sow doubts in United's minds. Pilkington, a 21-year-old from Hitchin who last played in the 3-0 home defeat by York in the Coca-Cola Cup, has the unenviable task of stopping Mark Hughes from adding to the goal he scored in his first reunion with United.

Hughes, recalling that it was the first time he had ever been cheered by both sets of fans, referred to "both challenges" for the championship. It is too early to write off any of the pur-

suing pack, although increasingly it looks as if it would take an extraordinary run to prevent a carve-up between the Uniteds.

Two of their number, Aston Villa and Arsenal, meet head on, with Villa a vastly different proposition to the side who surrendered 4-0 at home to the post-Grabiner, pre-Robertson Gunners in April. Brian Little was too negative in his tactical approach at Highbury in October, and will be keen to redress the balance at the expense of one of his closest friends.

Tottenham, now up to fifth, also have a score to settle from April - namely the 4-1 thumping Everton gave them in the FA Cup semi-final - while Liverpool entertain Southampton urgently needing to end a run of five defeats and a draw.

The last team they beat, Manchester City, have hardly looked back since. They go to Leeds with 10 points from four matches and this week earned Alan Ball the season's most unexpected Manager of the Month award.

The last four years just about everything has happened. Giants killed, keepers felled, insects dying, replays behind closed doors

Between 1993 and 1991, the FA Cup competition proper happened elsewhere - teams like Peacehaven and Telscombe having their glory while Kingstonsian struggled through relatively mundane league games. For 58 years, nothing. But, in the last four, just about everything. Giants killed, goalkeepers felled, insects dying, replays behind closed doors. And this year, genuine hopes of the football version of basketball's biggest game of the 1980s, Kingston against Manchester United.

Kingstonsian, who play Third Division Plymouth Argyle tomorrow, were a significant name in amateur football for decades. Often high up the Isthmian League alongside Wimbledon (until the Dons turned pro in 1963), FA Amateur Cup winners in 1933,

Wembley finalists in 1960, semi-finalists four times. And numerous other trophies underlining their cup prowess. But in the FA Cup they fell apart. Epsom helped themselves to 10 goals in one game, while Corinthian and Delphian League backwaters regularly dumped Ks out. Leatherhead doing so long before the "Leatherhead Lip" (whatever happened to him?). And 1960 was even worse. Thanks to their aforementioned Wembley appearance, Kingstonsian only had to apply by 20 June to "authentically" enter the competition proper. Guess what arrived in the post on 21 June?

Final qualifying round defeats increased in frequency in modern times - a mixture of second-replay injury-time defeats, open goal misses and the FA rule which says Ks will never win at

FAN'S EYE VIEW

No 126
Kingstonsian
Mark Murphy

Slough denied them in 1985, 1990 and 1991. So when Welling succumbed in 1992, the explosion of emotion was understandable, if occasionally bordering on the illegal.

The Peterborough tie in the competition proper was a new experience to all but the oldest Ks fans - and they got great press out of it, with their "patient passing game" and "dead fly" goal celebration. Although the Peterborough fans' view that the game was a tedious masterclass they should have won in the last minute was probably nearer the mark.

Alas, Ks lost their captain, centre-half and top goalscorer to injury and manager Chris Kelly (so that's what happened to him) quipped that if the Pope or the Archbishop of Canterbury rang up they'd get a game. Yet salvation did come from above - a 50p coin training Ks goalkeeper Adrian Blake with Ks three down after an hour and bound for humiliation. Ks reached humiliation (9-1, if you must ask) - but without their stricken keeper. And, with the FA in barnstorm mode, a behind-closed-doors replay was ordered.

Kelly was rightly contemptuous of the decision and interpreted "club officials" as loosely as FA regulations permitted when allocating passes for the match. In such familiar surroundings, with two of the injured back in the side, Ks lost only 1-0.

An improbable win at Dover last year set Ks up at home to struggling Brighton. In a game as dramatic as Peterborough had been dull, two Jamie Ndah goals saw them off. One was a 20-yard overhead spectacular, denied "Goal of the Month" status by some Matt Le Tissier tap-in.

Our second-round pairing with fellow Isthmians Aylesbury was an anti-climax we were fated to lose, and which inflicted the duck walk on an underserving football fraternity. So this year we're getting

greedy - and blasé. There was more concern about the first round in the bar than first round opponents after the final qualifying round win over Towbridge. That first-round game was only treated like the 5-1 win over Eastern League opponents that it was. Now expectations have radically altered.

"Doing ourselves justice" against League opposition used to mean a draw or narrow defeat. This year, we believe, we have a chance. True, Plymouth are well-versed in the art of heating teams at our level, but now we've been there and done it. With this year's Ks team the best for some time, there's a new perspective on doing ourselves justice.

In 1992, one Ks fan commented: "I could get used to this." Well, we all have now, and we're loving every minute.

TEAM NEWS

Aston Villa v Arsenal

Aston Villa are hoping Townsend (right instep injury) will be fit. If he is ruled out, Staunton is likely to deputise. Draxler, Mosevic and Charles are all expected to shake off minor knocks. Berghuis has a calf muscle injury and may miss his first game for Arsenal since his transfer from Inter Milan in January. Keown (leg) is back in contention for a midfield role.

Blackburn v West Ham

New Swedish striker Gudmundsson is in the Blackburn squad but is considered an unlikely starter because of his lack of match fitness. Bonner is expected to replace McKinstry in midfield. Defender Martin is ruled out by a hamstring injury, so West Ham reshuffle their back four. Breacker comes in at right-back. Potts switches to centre back and Davis, back after suspension, takes over from the injured Rowland at left-back.

Bolton v Nottingham Forest

Bolton, with a depleted squad, are said to be looking to complete the signing of Newcastle midfielder Stuart Pearce. Patterson, Lee and Stubbs are injured, while Patterson is scoring a brace. Patterson, Forest have been hit by flu, with Silvert and Bart-Williams among the ill. Halstead takes over in defence from the suspended Christie while manager Clark hopes striker Lee (thigh) will be fit.

Leeds v Manchester City

The Swedish striker Brohn is set for his home league debut. Defenders Patterson and Johnson are available again but Palmer impressed in midweek and manager Wilkinson may name an unchanged side. Manager Ball has runner Alex Richardson City side following the run of three wins and a draw.

Liverpool v Southampton

Southampton's backline is as unsettled as Liverpool's attack. Liverpool are expected to avoid losing four successive home games at Anfield for the first time since 1973. The Liverpool defence, including Charlton, could earn a recall for Southampton. Striker Robinson (knee) and Bennett (calf) have fitness tests and defender Nelson (groin) could return.

Manchester United v Chelsea

Manchester United's elbow injury means that reserve goalkeeper Aldington comes in. United are also without suspended midfielder Keane and Butt. Chelsea's Johnson starts a three-match suspension, so Sinclair is set to deputise. Gullis is in the squad but is again rated a doubtful starter with a calf injury.

QPR v Middlesbrough

Hampson could make his full debut for QPR. Top scorer Higgins has recovered from an ankle injury and is expected to return for Middlesbrough. Utility player Basham has been added to the squad.

Tottenham v Everton

Tottenham are expected to be unchanged as they bid to maintain their surge towards the top of the table. Everton will have Anselmi leading their attack in place of the injured Rideout. Home has failed to regain his place in midfield.

Wimbledon v Newcastle

Wimbledon's injury list is shortening with Cunningham and Ardley competing for places. Newcastle expect their leading scorer Ferdinand to be fit after taking a knock in midweek. Otherwise manager Keegan can field an unchanged side.

صلى الله عليه وسلم



Starting next week: a bright new sports section every Monday

SECOND TEST: Atherton's men succumb to little-known spinner after severe pace examination

Donald triggers England collapse

MARTIN JOHNSON

reports from Johannesburg
South Africa 332 & 5-0
England 200

Jettisoned as the team's spiritual advisor during the ill-fated revolution (confirmation to some that God is not only a Yorkshireman, but actually living in Farsley), the Rev Andrew Wigfield-Digby paid a visit to the Wanderers yesterday, and doubtless wondered whether he might be in with a chance of getting his old job back.

England are not quite without a prayer in this Test match, but all the signs are there that some kind of divine intervention — such as one of those Johannesburg thunderstorms that have inconveniently disappeared — is now required.

The decision to bowl first with an all-seam attack now looks even potter than it did on Thursday morning, since when England have managed to make a left-arm spinner with a Test record of 5 for 359 in five games look like Shane Warne, and will now have to bat last on a wearing pitch with an unholo deficit.

England's bowling yesterday did little to alleviate the suspicion that an injury to Dominic Cork would leave them hopelessly short of ammunition, and they followed this up by batting like an XI plucked at random from one of the beer tents.

Michael Atherton's dismissal set the tone for England's desperate reply of 200 to South Africa's 332, the captain shouldering arms to a ball from Allan Donald that clipped his off stump, and Donald's fierce examination of Mark Ramprakash was as one-sided a contest as will be witnessed — bar Devco Malcolm batting left-handed against him, perhaps — for the rest of this series.

Ramprakash played some wonderful shots during his 51-minute innings, nearly all of them, sadly, during rehearsals at the non-striker's end. When it came to the business end of the bowling, Ramprakash was literally unable to lay bat on ball, and most of the 35 deliveries he faced were fresh air shots.

Having driven Donald to the cover boundary to get off the mark after 32 scoreless deliveries, Ramprakash got a touch carried away by this orgy of run-making, and was still in mid-drive when Donald arrowed a full length ball into his middle stump.

Ramprakash, dropped after making a pair in last summer's Lord's Test, went on to make 1,638 runs in his last 16 innings for Middlesex, including six centuries and three double centuries, but after making 9 and 4 in his two Test innings on this tour (and making them pretty

horribly at that) the gangplank looms once again.

England would have been in more trouble at 51 for 3 had Alec Stewart, having played and missed so often he kept staring at his bat as though someone had shaved a couple of inches off it, not been the beneficiary of a rare stroke of luck. Stewart's spliced pull off Donald lobbed gently to mid-wicket, and it was such an easy catch that Stewart was pulling off his gloves en route for the pavilion when Shaun Pollock let it squirm from his grasp.

Ironically, Stewart and Graham Thorpe then appeared to have huddled their way into some kind of form when South Africa called up Clive Elsteem to bowl his left-arm spin, and he promptly ended a third-wicket partnership of 64 with his first delivery.

However, if Thorpe's expression registered even more astonishment than Mike Gatting's after Shane Warne's first ball in the 1993 Ashes series, it had less to do with the delivery than the decision. TV replays are never satisfactory when it comes to bat-pad catches, but in this case Thorpe's bat was barely in camera shot when the ball lobbed to short leg off his front pad.

Stewart was also the victim of a bad decision (his own) when he whipped Pringle straight to the man at short mid-wicket, placed there specifically for one of his trademark shots. This was a nasty wicket to lose just before tea, as was Hick's just after it.

There was nothing wrong with Hick's plan to demonstrate that most of Elsteem's gentle floaters belonged in the High Street but, in attempting to hit him out of the ground, Hick merely drove back a return catch. Not long afterwards, Jack Russell failed to clear mid-wicket, and Elsteem had figures of 3 for 9 from seven overs.

There then followed a riveting contest between Donald and Robin Smith, and although Smith got the seat of his flannels grubby once or twice, he also replied with some rasping shots. The most rasping of all was a square cut for six over third man off Brian McMillan, and without Smith's gutsy half-century, England would have been blown away for a disgraceful total rather than a merely inadequate one.

Stann Pollock, who is being fought over by both Warwickshire and Hampshire, and who had earlier demonstrated his all-rounder credentials with the bat, proved too spiteful for England's lower order, although he needed a brilliant slip catch from Darryl Cullinan to account for Cork, and a dubious low decision to remove Angus Fraser.

Smith was last out with a leading edge back to McMillan, leaving Malcolm with the only score he is as familiar with as ought: nought out.



Darren Gough takes evasive action at the Wanderers yesterday

Photograph: Laurence Griffiths/Empics

Earlier, Malcolm had justified his selection by finishing with four wickets but, in all honesty, his figures flattered him. South Africa's last three wickets added 54 more runs in 70 minutes, which is some indication of England's accuracy.

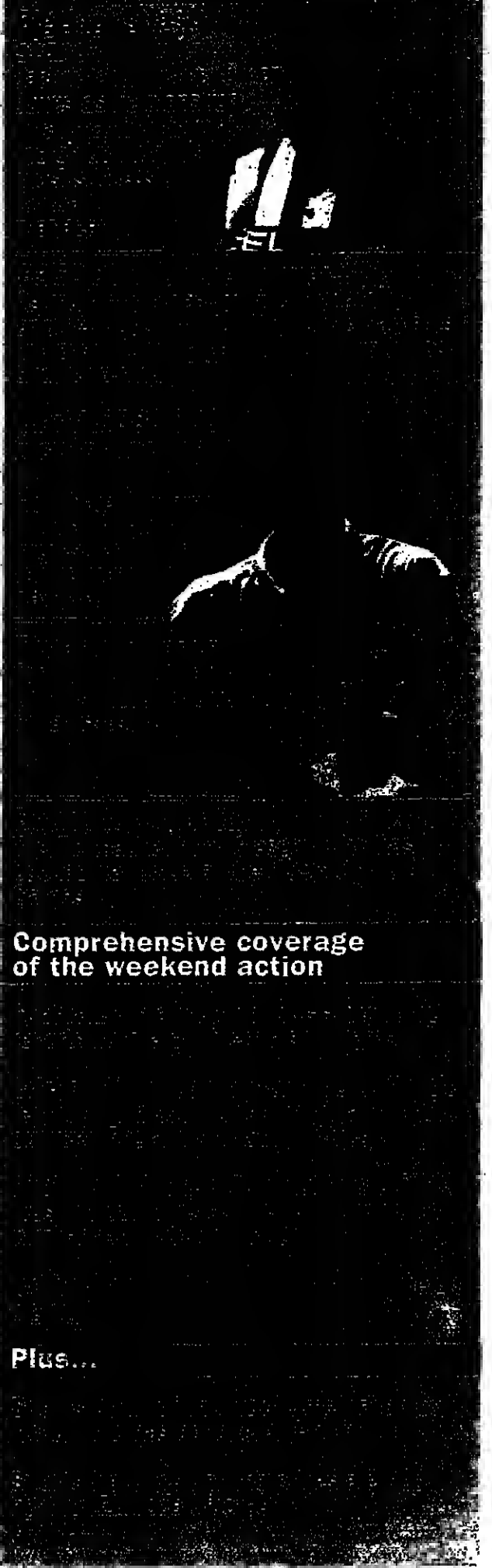
However, at least Malcolm took wickets. Fraser and Darren Gough finished with a joint aggregate of 1 for 133 in 35 overs, and it is a bit of a worry to see bowlers more used to being clapped off looking clapped out.

More cricket, page 23

Scoreboard

ENGLAND - First Innings	SA - First Innings
1st Inn: 24 bats, 2 overs	1st Inn: 24 bats, 2 overs
2nd Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	2nd Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
3rd Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	3rd Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
4th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	4th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
5th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	5th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
6th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	6th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
7th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	7th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
8th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	8th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
9th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	9th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
10th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	10th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
11th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	11th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
12th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	12th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
13th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	13th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
14th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	14th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
15th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	15th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
16th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	16th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
17th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	17th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
18th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	18th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
19th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	19th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
20th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	20th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
21st Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	21st Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
22nd Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	22nd Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
23rd Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	23rd Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
24th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	24th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
25th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	25th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
26th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	26th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
27th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	27th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
28th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	28th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
29th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	29th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs
30th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs	30th Inn: 22 bats, 3 overs

Inside Monday's 24 pages



Comprehensive coverage of the weekend action

Plus...

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PLEASE HELP A LITTLE DONKEY IN DISTRESS



These four donkeys were found starving and in the most appalling condition. They were infested with lice and their neglected, overgrown hooves made walking extremely difficult. They had been kept with horses and had suffered deep and painful bite wounds on their backs. Their fear of humans was so intense that one poor donkey threw himself on the ground, trembling with fright, when first exarated by the vet.

We are now providing them with the care they deserve. We have rescued over 6,700 donkeys but there are still donkeys in trouble who need our help. Please try to spare a little, this Christmas, to help us with the immense task of giving all our donkeys the food, love, care and attention they need.

Our administration costs amount to just under 6p in the £1, so any help you can give will provide direct help to the donkeys.

PLEASE HELP US TO HELP THEM

Please send donations to:
The Donkey Sanctuary, (Dept B172),
Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 0NU
Tel: (01395) 578222
Enquiries to Dr E. D. Svendsen, M.B.E.

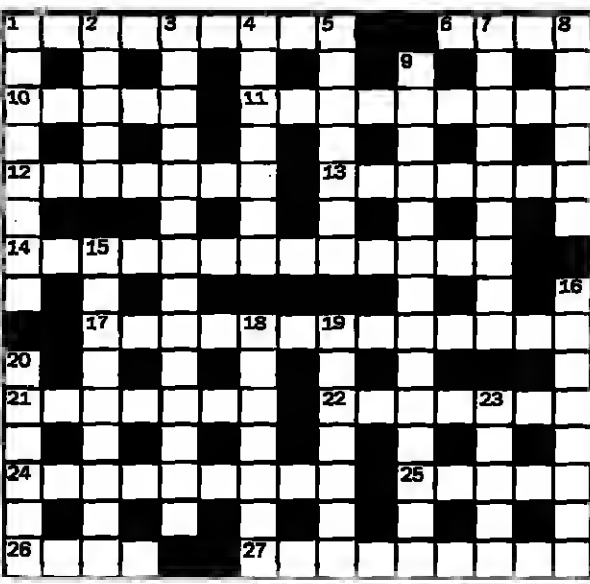


I enclose Cheque/Postal Order for £
Name: Mr/Mrs/Miss
Address
Post Code

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 2847, Saturday 2 December

By Phil



The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive handbacked copies of the excellent Chambers Biographical Dictionary, worth £35. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5NL. Please use the box number and postcode. Last week's winners were: Mr G Plant, Halesowen; Geraldine Horne, Enfield; Kenneth Roderick, Mid Glamorgan; Mr R A Lloyd Jones, Cardiff; Mrs Jean Phipps, Cumbria.

ACROSS

- Was pencil marking a crime regarding bathroom furnishing? (4,5)
- Show disapproval of man's society (4)
- Make a gro, taking book from its place (5)
- Variety of plain one about right? This one's far from plain (9)
- See one investing in source of gold, producing lots of places (7)
- Get tracking into meat? Not with food like this (7)
- Flying high: namely going round the airports in some order (13)
- Girl exercises, working with a hammer in South-West town (7,6)
- Provider of instruction if I get introduced to editor and Queen (7)
- Aim concern after dropping last cocktail (7)
- Pick in advance: soft colour with just a hint of emerald? Splendid (9)
- Knocking conflict will split extremes of alliance (5)
- Examine the Northern group upon return (4)
- Unbeatable - but with no one to play against? (9)

DOWN

- We may catch tamen on fewer occasions on the radio (8)
- Is turning into meat product causing confusion? (5)
- Not what modern Independent readers are! (6,5,5)
- Those who use pillar-boxes may have misperceived redness (7)
- The old city requires 9-5, what? (7)
- New nervous reaction interrupts perfect situation just the same (9)
- Only Solomon will suppress East (6)
- One died in old car accident - it may put a lot on one's plate (7,3,4)
- Isn't sure working on Sunday will do for being out-of-touch (9)
- Openings involving the French film actresses (8)
- Rare metal: I'm brute to melt (7)
- Just starting, and one picked up the trail (7)
- Drink taken round each cup family organising here? (6)
- Hint letter that gets dropped in box (5)

Friday's solution

REPOSURE OBSERVE
EAT A LUNCH
GOLDSTANDARD
LA NTE DE LA
ABED FINEW BWER
I O ES MBA
MILITUM ACQUITE
H A A
UTOPIAN HAGUAT
N LE E Y A
BLOW TWICE STU
O E S N E S
WHISTLESHOUT
E A S A S I N E
DATABUS ACCUSED

Last Saturday's solution

MODERER GOOD
M R D A G R Z
DEAN ACCUSTOMED
G K H R B
OPAQUE ELEVATOR
M T L
NEARBY CHAISE
D A A R O
BARRACKS ADAGUS
C A R H E I
GUINSAFOWN TYPE
M E A A A A
HEATH BARNING
H E E E E

New look for Parkhead's tartan army

Football

Mel Gibson probably started it. All those brave Scots winning things left, right and centre-forward in Braveheart while attired in natty outfits was a cinematic success equal to a good run in Europe.

Yesterday Celtic followed suit by launching a new piece of club kit fit to grace any Old Firm derby. The more sartorial or clanish fan, depending on your point of view, can now add to his scarf, bob hat and replica shirt...the Parkhead tartan.

It will be used in kilts for women and men, full Highland dress and scarves. The tartan replaces an earlier design, but don't hurry to the club shop because it will be available only through Geoffrey (Tailor) Highland Crafts in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Galashiels. However, selected stores in America will be able to supply Gibson should he desire one for his next epic of the glens.

صكر من الامل